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Primary EFL in China: Teachers' Perceptions and Practices with Regard to Learner-centredness

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis represents my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made, and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this University or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualifications.

Signed _____

WANG Qiang (王蔷)

ABSTRACT

The central focus of this study is to explore how learner-centredness is perceived and practised by Chinese primary EFL teachers in the recent national curriculum reform in China, which promotes learner-centred ideology in all school subjects beginning from 2001.

Following an introduction to the research context, the study begins with a comprehensive literature review for the purpose of finding out where and how notions of learner-centredness originated and developed in the West from the past to the present, from general education to the field of English language teaching, along with doubts, criticisms, and confusions gathered around the ideology. This is followed by a review of studies on learner-centred educational reforms in developing countries. Chinese philosophical thoughts, traditional educational practices, and recent research efforts into learner-centred teaching are also reviewed to highlight the influence of specific cultural contexts for implementing such an ideology. To investigate the Chinese primary EFL teachers' views on and practices in learner-centredness, this study adopted a mixed mode of research methods using both quantitative and qualitative techniques to collect data in order not only to reveal the scale of impact of the curriculum reform on teachers' views and practices but also to provide an in-depth understanding of teachers' classroom behaviours with regard to learner-centredness.

The study involved a large scale questionnaire survey of 1000 primary EFL teachers and 18 classroom observations of teachers acknowledged as being good teachers along with various forms of teacher interviews by which teachers' beliefs and behaviours regarding learner-centredness were studied. The main findings from the study are as follows: (1) Chinese primary EFL teachers overwhelmingly welcomed the new ideology for curriculum change while pedagogically they preferred a middle path – the teacher-directed learner-centred approach (TDLC). (2) Both their beliefs and reported practices reflected a mixture of learner-centred and teacher-centred teaching. (3) Classroom practices of 18 teachers representing good practices at the time of the study showed clear Chinese characteristics of teacher-directed learning-centred teaching.

Based on the data collected from different sources, the cultural appropriateness of learner-centred teaching in the Chinese context is discussed. A reconceptualisation of the concept for the Chinese primary EFL context is drawn from teachers' views, which contributes to a better understanding of Chinese primary EFL teachers' perceptions and practices of learner-centredness in China. The research has important implications for teacher educators in understanding and supporting teachers for curriculum change and for research into learner-centred education in different contexts as well as for research into primary EFL in other developing countries.

ABBREVIATIONS

APA	American Psychological Association
BANA	Countries such as Britain, Australia and North America where language teaching is offered mostly to adults with a commercial orientation
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
DES	Department of Education and Science
EFL	English as a foreign language
ELT	English language teaching
ESL	English as a second language
EYL	English for young learners
FLT	Foreign language teaching
LAMP	Learners-as-main-participants
LC	Learner-centredness
MOE	Ministry of Education
NECS	National English Curriculum Standards
RQ	Research question
SED	Scotland Education Department which published the Primary Memorandum in 1965.
TC	Teacher-centredness
TDLC	Teacher-directed-learner-centred approach
TESEP	State education either in primary, secondary schools or colleges/ universities in countries where English is either a second or a foreign language
TPR	Total Physical Response
UPs	Underlying Principles
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aims and rationale

In 2001, China began its 21st century nation-wide curriculum reform across all subject areas in basic education within which the notion of learner-centredness (LC) became one of the most important underlying principles. Since then, schools in China, beginning from grade 1 in both primary and junior high schools, have entered a new round of educational reform. This study aims to investigate both the perceptions and classroom practices of Chinese primary teachers regarding the concept of LC in English language teaching (ELT). The purpose is to find out to what extent the concept of LC is accepted, understood and mediated by primary teachers of English at the beginning stage of a major curriculum reform in the Chinese context.

Learner-centredness has been a robust word in mainstream Western education for a long time, but it was only in the last 20 to 30 years that the term began to occur with increasing frequency in books and articles on language teaching (Tudor, 1996). Its meaning has changed and developed over the years and the term has caused a considerable amount of debate and confusion over the past century among educators as well as teachers for it has been interpreted differently by different people at different times in different contexts (Entwistle, 1970; Tudor, 1993, 1996; Nunan and Brindley, 1986; Holliday, 1994b; Chung and Walsh, 2000).

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the developing world in implementing a learner-centred approach to education. As schooling in developing countries takes place under conditions that are very different from those in industrial countries (Lockheed and Verspoor *et al.*, 1991), how such a notion can be implemented in schools of the developing world has caused a great deal of concern among scholars and educators. Holliday (2005) is very critical of the fact that learner-centredness is often used and treated as a superior "Nativespeakerist" methodological prescription. He points out that its meanings are deeply imbedded in Western cultural and educational values and therefore should not be blindly implemented in the 'Other' cultures without consideration or valuing of the Other's cultural traditions or legitimate conditions. He makes a distinction between two types of educational contexts in countries he terms as BANA and TESEP (Holliday, 1994a:4; 1994b:12). BANA refers to countries such as Britain, Australia and North

America where language teaching is offered mostly to adults with a commercial orientation while TESEP refers to state education either in primary, secondary schools or in universities or colleges in countries where English is either a second or a foreign language. As the two types of educational contexts differ not only in ways of organisation and administration but also in educational goals, learning content, time arrangement, assessment standards and resources available, Holliday argues for an appropriate methodology for an appropriate context.

With the awareness that many indicators in the current use of LC are derived from Western notions of good practice (Croft, 2002), it is both important and necessary to explore what the term 'learner-centredness' can be taken to mean in the present day, what 'centring teaching on the learner' actually involves (Tudor, 1996: viii) and how such a goal can best be justified and achieved in classrooms of different socio-cultural as well as educational contexts.

China, as a developing country and, in particular, a vast country with the largest population in the world, has teaching conditions varying greatly both within itself and from those of more developed countries. If LC is to grow on the Chinese soil, it is bound to develop itself within the conditions of China. After all, it is the teachers who are the ones to mediate between theory and practice and do what they see as feasible and possible to implement the new curriculum in their contexts. Therefore, an investigation of the kind of approaches and pedagogies that have been perceived as most relevant and effective in promoting learning by primary teachers is of great importance for both the implementation of the new curriculum and for the effective training of teachers for curriculum innovation.

From 1999 to 2003, as one of the English curriculum project coordinators, I was involved in the design of the new National English Curriculum Standards (NECS) for Chinese schools. With great enthusiasm, I, together with my colleagues in the project team, outlined the aims and the rationale as well as the competence-based standards for the new NECS. In 2001, the implementation of NECS began from the first grade in primary schools. Undoubtedly, the introduction of NECS has posed great challenges to all the English teachers. How teachers perceive LC and its related pedagogy will determine to a large extent how they implement the new curriculum. As a curriculum developer myself, I am deeply concerned and intrigued to find out how the promoted ideology is being taken and implemented by the teachers, and what

benefits and difficulties are perceived. I am interested in these questions not only as a curriculum developer but also as an independent researcher.

I am fully aware that the process of implementing a new curriculum is a complex one. Research from the last three decades in both industrial and developing countries has concluded that 'educational change is a complex, dynamic, lengthy, and idiosyncratic process, particularly when teachers are expected to take up a new approach from what they had been familiar with for many years in the past' (Lockheed and Verspoor *et al.*, 1991:219). Nunan (1988) also points out that it is often assumed that there exists a one-to-one relationship between the planned, implemented and assessed curriculum and such an assumption 'grossly over-simplifies what is, in fact, an extremely complex set of processes' (p.35). Even with accepted ideologies for change, teaching styles are much more resistant to change than the subject content (Shuard, 1994). Given that all curriculum changes are extremely challenging and demanding as well as affectively intimidating to many teachers (Fullan. 1991; Hutchinson 1991; Markee, 1997), it can be assumed that in the process of a mass implementation of its new curriculum in China, the same may hold true for many Chinese teachers who are either resistant towards changes or are feeling incapable of meeting the new requirements imposed by the new curriculum. As no systematic research has been done in such an area concerning primary English teachers' attitudes and reactions towards curriculum change, there is a need for such research to be carried out.

A final concern lies in the gap between the principles and practices of LC. It is recognised by many that LC is more of an ideology or attitude (Tudor, 1996; Nunan, 2004) than a specific set of classroom procedures or techniques. In China, LC as an ideology has been advocated by the new curriculum guidelines, but how it can be implemented in the classroom is not specifically spelt out. As a teacher trainer myself, I find that most teachers are aware that LC is being promoted by NECS and that they are also keen in trying to put the ideology into classroom practice but without knowing exactly how to do it. Consequently, not an inconsiderable number of primary teachers of English were copying other teachers' lessons without understanding the meaning of LC, particularly, when games and songs are recommended by the new curriculum as useful forms of classroom experience for children. Teachers are trying to make their teaching full of fun with a tendency to downplay the language to be learned. Some Chinese scholars have raised similar

concerns (e.g. Cui, 2004; Huang, 2005). I remember seeing one prize-winning teacher giving a demonstration lesson at a national teaching contest held in 2003 in China. The topic of the lesson was Christmas and the children were from Grade 5, aged 10-11. The teacher, without spending much time helping children to learn the words, phrases and expressions related to the decorations and celebrations of Christmas, brought a guitar and the costume of Santa Claus, spent a total of 30 minutes teaching the children to sing just one Christmas song and learn to say 'Merry Christmas!' The lesson was rated very differently by the judges as some considered it a very successful lesson because both the teacher and the children totally enjoyed it while others thought it was not a good lesson because not much teaching and learning had taken place although children had fun during the lesson.

The above experience makes me think about the following questions: what does LC really mean? How should its notions be implemented in the classroom? Does a 'fun' class equate with LC? What are the key features of a learner-centred classroom? How can teachers be helped to develop effective strategies and procedures for implementing LC in the classroom? As a curriculum developer and teacher trainer, I believe finding answers to these questions has important implications for the successful implementation of NECS and for effective teacher training. Only with a better understanding of these questions, can we be in a position to determine how we, as teacher trainers and educators, can help and support teachers in the process of change within the particular social, cultural and institutional context. Moreover, the study can provide important insights and implications for other developing countries which are also in the process of implementing learner-centred education in their contexts.

1.2 Research questions

With all the above concerns in mind, three main research questions are set out. These research questions, centring on primary teachers' beliefs and behaviours regarding learner-centred ideology, are presented below. They will be further refined and elaborated in Chapter 4.

(1) What are Chinese teachers' general attitudes towards and beliefs about learner-centred teaching in the context of primary EFL in China?

(2) What are teachers' reported practices, approaches to teaching, and factors affecting their practices and choice of approaches?

(3) What do the practices of generally accepted good teachers reveal about LC in Chinese primary schools and the underlying factors that determine the kind of practices observed?

1.3 Overview of the thesis

The thesis consists of eight chapters. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 provides the background for the current study, moving from an overview of the international trend on primary foreign language provision to the social economic context for the educational reform in China. The chapter also introduces the country's educational policy and administration structures, its primary education system, its foreign language provision in primary schools, ending with an introduction to the new English language curriculum and its main objectives. Chapter 3 reviews the literature on the notion of LC. It begins with a historical overview on its origins and then moves to an elaboration into its modern developments both in general education and in English language teaching (ELT) along with debates and controversies gathered around the concept. Studies on LC in developing countries, Chinese philosophical thoughts and educational traditions are also reviewed. The chapter ends with some highlighted issues which need to be further explored. Chapter 4 outlines and justifies the research methodology. It begins with the main research questions and their respective sub-questions followed by a rationale for the research design. Then data collection procedures and analysis methods are presented. The ethics of the research and the role of the researcher are also discussed. Chapters 5 and 6 present the quantitative and qualitative data analysis respectively with Chapter 5 focusing on the questionnaire data and Chapter 6 on data collected from classroom observations and teacher interviews. Chapter 7 is devoted to the discussion of findings based on both quantitative and qualitative data and brings together insights and interpretations to contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the issues and concerns of the current research. The last chapter, Chapter 8 presents conclusions, main contributions, and implications.

CHAPTER 2 PRIMARY EFL IN CHINA

This chapter introduces the social and educational background for the current study. As the study focuses on Chinese primary foreign language education – investigating teachers' perceptions, interpretations and mediations of LC, it is necessary to examine both the international and the national contexts where the study is undertaken. The chapter begins with a brief overview of the worldwide trend of primary foreign language provision in recent years. Then it moves on to an introduction of the social and economic context in China for educational reform followed by the information on the country's general educational policy and administrative system, as well as other related information concerning foreign language teaching in primary schools, primary teacher qualifications, and teacher training provision. The chapter ends with the introduction to the new NECS for the 21st century.

2.1 Worldwide trend in primary foreign language provision

The status of modern languages and attitudes towards knowing languages are constantly changing, reflecting social, political and educational processes. Since the late 1980s, particularly entering 1990s, there has been a notable international trend of development in foreign language provision in primary schools (Cameron, 2003). Many countries made their decisions to start foreign language teaching (FLT) in the primary school within a very short time without much serious research or consideration of how such a course would be offered, where to find materials and resources, what methodologies to use, how teachers were to be trained and how assessment was to be conducted (Rixon,1992). However, since then, new curricula, new textbooks and new methodological research have all advanced very rapidly. Nikolov and Curtain (2000) note that in the early 1980s, early foreign language teaching was still a dead topic, while twenty years later, they edited a 'wonderful collection of papers' which provided comprehensive information on the development of foreign language education for young learners worldwide (p.5). The world's

interest in early foreign language education is indicated not only by the rising number of children learning modern languages, but also by the formal development of primary modern languages curricula, the flux of international publications on textbooks, discussions of methodologies, and research related to teaching languages to young learners.

In Europe, due to its geographical characteristics and economic structures, interest in teaching foreign languages in schools has been a long tradition. Quite a number of European countries, Austria, for example, began to experiment with primary foreign language teaching from the mid-twentieth century. But it was not until the 1990s that more and more countries formalised FLT in primary schools and also started experimenting at a lower age than required by their Ministries of Education, such as Hungary, Italy and Croatia. In some countries, the teaching of foreign languages to children has been in the educational tradition for a long time, like Sweden (Nikolov and Curtain, 2000).

In many countries or regions in Asia, primary English is also rapidly growing. In Korea, English became the major foreign language in primary schools in 1997 from the third grade to the sixth grade as a compulsory subject (Ministry of Education, Korea, 1997); in Bangladesh, it was introduced as an official part of the curriculum in the primary sector in 1992 from Year 1; in Indonesia, it was introduced in 1994 beginning from Year 4 (for a global survey of English for young learners, see the British Council, 1999). Even in countries like the United States and the United Kingdom, where modern languages are considered less important traditionally, there has been a growing concern and genuine discussion on the values and needs in offering them (Nikolov & Curtain, 2000; Mitchell, 2003) simply because learning a foreign language is seen as having values for young children that go beyond its use for communication.

Despite considerable doubts and debates over the necessity of primary foreign language provision both internationally and domestically, (e.g. Burstall, 1978; Singleton, 1989; Singleton and Lengyel, 1995; Marinova-Todd *et al.*, 2000; Nunan,

2002; Gui, 1987; Wang, 2003; Cui, 2004), there is a general consensus on the benefits of primary foreign language in the school curriculum (see Rixon, 2000). It is recognised that FLT is an important part of whole person education for future global citizens and it helps with the development of positive attitudes towards unfamiliar cultures and facilitating understanding among people of different cultural origins. It is also believed that foreign language learning is a key for better understanding of oneself and of others in an increasingly globalised and integrated world (Mitchell, 2003).

2.2 Social and economic context for educational reform

A country's educational policy can only be properly understood by reference to the web of inherited ideas and values, habits and customs (Alexander, 2000) as well as the social and economic development that makes one country distinct from another. We should also bear in mind that social-cultural values are not static (Holliday, 1994b); they change as a result of social-economic change. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the social-economic changes that have been taking place in China which have led to the changes in social values and thus the need for educational reform.

Since opening its doors to the outside world in 1979, China has undergone tremendous changes in economic reform and social restructuring, particularly from the state-owned planned economy to a multifaceted socialist market economy. As a result of the continuing open-door policy and economic reform, China has scored a sustainable, rapid development in its national economy and achieved a notable improvement in people's living standards in recent years. Such social-economic changes have also brought about great challenges to traditional values and habits of thinking.

As a collective culture, China has always prioritised national and social values, putting first the country's social and collective benefits before personal or individuals' needs. People have been educated to live and work for the progress and prosperity of the nation, believing that only with the nation's prosperity can one enjoy

personal wealth and security. The pursuit of personal goals and prosperity has long been considered a capitalist or bourgeois ideology. Education is recognised as a ladder leading to better positions with knowledge to serve the country. Standardised tests with objective items and discrete knowledge points have been used as the most important means for selecting the best. The reasons behind this are complex, mainly deriving from social and economic constraints. With the largest population in the world, China has made tremendous efforts over the years to ensure nine-year compulsory education. However, due to inadequate educational resources to allow all capable children to enter tertiary education, gate-keeping tests have become the sole selection route and thus the main concern for all schools, teachers, and parents of whom many have only one child in the family. As a result, success in education is often judged by test scores and teaching is often aimed at helping children pass tests, giving little attention to individual needs and different learning styles. As a result, teachers have become static in their educational thinking with fixed teaching contents and ossified methods. Students trained in such a way inevitably become `worshippers of books and authority', lacking creativity and enterprising spirits, for they are not used to learning and thinking independently (Liu, 1987:165).

With the rapid development of a socialist market economy which encapsulates the dual realities of socialism and capitalism in China's economic system (Kwong, 1997), China has undergone a gradual transition over the last twenty-five years both economically and ideologically. The successes of opening special economic zones, the practice of market economy and the policy of 'letting a few people get wealthy first' have challenged the traditional values on collective wealth. It is increasingly accepted that national or social benefits do not have to be in contradiction with personal or individual needs. When individual talents are given a full swing, it can lead to not only personal development but also social and national development. As a result, individual talents and abilities are being recognised and differences rather than commonality are beginning to be valued and respected. However, the kind of individualism being recognised and encouraged is by no means the same as that in the

West. 'Individual rights in China were one's "share" of the rights of the community as a whole, not a license to do as one pleased' (Nisbett, 2003:6). By recognizing individual needs, China is seeking a new balance or a middle way between the opposing social and individual values and to rectify the past by making them co-exist in harmony with each other. Such a new balance is clearly manifested in the recently promoted ideology of 'people-orientedness' for social, cultural and technological development.

Education is thus seen as serving the needs of both personal and social development. Traditional educational values which over-emphasised authoritative knowledge and memorisation at the expense of cultivating individual creativity, interest in learning and problem-solving capabilities are challenged. It is increasingly recognised that new types of knowledge and capabilities, new ways of learning and teaching are needed for China to be able to compete in the world market economy and prevail in science and technological advancement. Education will have to rethink its goals and means for educating the future generation. Students' ability to just memorise and apply what is learned is no longer adequate for an increasingly competitive world as the ability to cope with change has become the most important skill for today's children (Shuard, 1994). As various new competencies needed for the knowledge society are widely accepted, educational reform, therefore, has become an issue of concern to the general public. How to adjust the existing educational system to meet international challenges has thus become one of the most important agendas for the government at the turn of the century. This shows how changes in educational goals are closely tied to the broader societal transitions and needs for economic development (Keating, 2005)

At the same time, the differences in educational philosophy between China and that of western countries are widely debated. Western education encourages diversified interests and active imaginations. Students are told to believe in themselves and solve problems in their own way. Chinese students, under the traditional knowledge-based education, are taught to memorise many intellectual

facts and work for high grades in exams. Thus, Chinese education has to date been predominantly centred on the teacher (Yen, 1987; Mao, 1991). Students' lack of creativity and practical skills, to some extent, has been recognised to affect the competitiveness of China's future. Therefore, China's education reformers hope to learn something good from the West while at the same time preserving the virtues of the Chinese traditional values so as to make the next generation more capable of meeting challenges in the 21st century.

From the early 1990s, quality education was strongly proposed by many scholars and educators to rectify the existing exam-oriented education. It became the main theme of the Third National Conference on Education held jointly by the Ministry of Education and the State Council in 1999, which was seen as a fundamental key to prepare the nation for fierce international competition politically, economically and technologically. The core concepts of quality education include cultivating students' creative mind, developing their practical competence in solving problems, and enhancing moral education. All these require changes in the teaching approach as well as methodologies which are seen as needing to move from TC to LC. As a result, the eighth educational reform since the founding of the People's Republic of China is under way throughout the country.

2.3 Educational reform in the 21st Century

Compared with all the previous reform agendas which were mainly modifications to the then existing syllabuses and textbooks, the eighth educational reform is a unique one in the history of Chinese education involving paradigm shifts from the traditional teacher-dominated, knowledge-based transmission mode of teaching to more learner-centred, experience-based, problem solving mode of teaching, putting more emphasis on satisfying learners' affective demands, cultivating their creative minds, developing their cognitive and metacognitive strategies, and encouraging their cooperative and interactive abilities. The concept of lifelong education is also first proposed heralding a radical change in its traditional mode of school education. LC, thus, becomes the philosophy underlying the educational

reform across all school subjects. The philosophy is, however, termed as (in direct translation from Chinese) learners-as-main-participants (LAMP) instead of LC. The two terms hold slightly different meanings if translated word for word from Chinese into English. LC in a direct translation from English to Chinese (xuesheng zhongxin – 学生中心) indicates that learners are the ones being in the spotlight or centre of learning, leaving no room for an explicit role of the teacher; while LAMP (xuesheng zhuti – 学生主体) treats learners as main participants, implying a supporting role of the teacher. As no corresponding translation exists in English, LAMP is adopted in the current thesis when the Chinese ideology needs to be specified or compared with LC. Likewise, LC is used when the Western ideology is referred to or needs to be specified. Otherwise, the two terms are written in the form of LAMP/LC with no particular distinction made when they both indicate similar ideological aspirations for educational change.

The educational reform in China follows a top-down process, with national curricula redesigned and new textbooks developed. Piloting of the new curricula for compulsory education began in 2001 with 42 piloting regions taking up 0.5-1.0% of first graders in primary and junior high schools and expanded incrementally to 2576 piloting regions in 2004 and moved to 100% for all first graders by 2005 (Liu, 2006).

2.4 General educational policy and the administrative system

The educational system in China is a highly centralised one. The national government determines national educational policies and produces general guidelines for implementation. The Ministry of Education (MOE) has direct responsibility for policy-making and strategic planning across the system as a whole. Its remit includes setting up curriculum goals, designing curriculum objectives for all school subjects, spelling out time and content requirements for each subject, reviewing and approving textbooks to be used in schools, and producing guidelines for curriculum implementation. At the provincial level, each provincial government defines the regional policies in line with the national curriculum guidelines and is responsible for managing teacher training other than that undertaken by universities, organizing

procedures for choosing textbooks from the listed approved range available, making suggestions for teaching methods, organizing seminars on methodology, deciding on assessment policy and procedures, except for exams administered through the central government as, for the past 20 years, in the case of National College Entrance Examinations. As passing examinations at all levels in schools is still seen as a pathway for social mobility and personal prosperity, its impact on education and classroom teaching continues. However, since 2003, there has been a gradual move towards decentralizing College Entrance Examinations from the national center to provinces, for example, in 2004, 11 provinces produced and administrated their own exams.

At the municipal, county or district level, there are local educational governing bodies that are responsible for local teacher training and supervision of teaching as well as assessment of learning. At the school level, the schools are responsible for recruiting students, allocating students to classes, implementing the requirements at all levels.

There is no national system of assessment set out for primary schools but there exists substantial monitoring of progress and quality by the district educational authorities for each core subject. The day-to-day administration is often in the hands of the district education offices. Moreover, the recruiting policy of many key middle schools also affects strongly primary education as well as parental expectations of primary education. Although no exams are required by state policy, key middle schools can set up private tests or hold competitions in order to select the best pupils from primary schools. As a result, many primary schools feel pressured and have to teach more than required in the curriculum to help children succeed in those tests.

For a long time, the curricula were made quite rigid and applied to all schools with little differentiation. In keeping with the move towards a more decentralised structure of education, the new curriculum guidelines for the 21st century set out a three-tier curriculum with national, regional and school components (Curriculum Reform Guidelines for Basic Education, 2001). The national component forms the

basic curriculum, which provides the common core for all schools. The regional component is intended to reflect regional social and cultural needs and traditions. Local schools are also allocated a small percentage to facilitate school options and advanced study in particular subjects. One of the main principles for designing curriculum standards for nine-year compulsory education is that teaching and assessment should proceed on the basis of what children have in common with the intention of enabling all children to attain common standards while at the same time acknowledging and respecting individual differences by employing a variety of teaching techniques to satisfy the needs of different learners.

2.5 Primary education in China

Since 1986, education in China has been compulsory for children aged 6-15 with normally six years in the primary school and three years in junior high school. The state primary school takes children at age six and includes grades one to six. The school curriculum has generally been organised around different subjects i.e. Chinese, Math, Social Science, Natural Science, Computer Science, Moral Education, Music, Drawing, Handcrafts, Physical Education, and English (beginning from Year 3 since 2001). In other words, Chinese primary teachers are all specialists who teach only their own respective subjects, though some may also take responsibility for managing a particular class for administrative function. The classroom setting in the primary school for many years has consisted (and still does) typically of desks and chairs placed in 6 single or 3 paired lines and 6 to 8 rows facing a large blackboard and the teacher's desk in the front with some slogans or mottoes and children's writing and drawings on the side and back walls. Children are expected to sit straight and raise their hands before they speak and stand up to answer questions.

Because of the large population and lack of resources in many of the state schools, classes are usually big, with above 40 pupils and many over 50. As far as the teaching approach is concerned, there has long been a strong emphasis on the basics – vocabulary and structures in the case of English, and the teacher is seen as the sole authority of learning, who should be respected at all times, a doctrine inherited from

families, the Chinese culture and society. Teaching follows a didactic, spoon-feed mode and learners are expected to be attentive and diligent, and do what the teachers tell them to do.

2.6 Primary foreign language provision and teacher supply

Although foreign language teaching has enjoyed a long tradition for over 100 years on the secondary school curriculum with English and Russian as the main foreign languages at different times, English as a foreign language was added to the primary curriculum only in 2001. Nevertheless, primary English had experienced some rapid development since the late 1980s and particularly after the 1990s mainly in coastal regions and major cities. This was partly due to the rapid social and economic development which provided wider and better job and study opportunities for those whose English was more competent and partly due to the widely held assumption that for learning a foreign language, the earlier, the better. However, primary English had not had a high status due to its unofficial position on the school curriculum and there had been a lack of investment for training teachers and effort in producing appropriate materials. Thus, teaching had largely followed what was done in the middle schools with a special focus on the study of vocabulary and grammar rules in a teacher-dominated way. As a result, primary English teaching was not standardised and the quality of teaching could hardly be guaranteed due to inadequate time allocations, lack of appropriate materials and qualified teachers. What is more, pupils who had learned some English in the primary school had to start from scratch again in middle school and re-learn what was taught in the primary school as not everybody had possibly learned the language and the levels varied a great deal. Consequently, primary resources had been wasted, pupils' motivation had been damaged, and primary teachers' morale and social status had been quite low.

Entering the 21st century, along with the international trend in foreign language provision and particularly with the need to improve the national proficiency of English, a main strategy for many countries to build the capacity required to operate in a globalised world (Graddol, 2006), the Chinese government decided in 2001 to

promote the teaching of English in primary schools incrementally from cities to counties and from towns to villages. A new Primary English Requirement was designed and issued by MOE in 2001 according to which children start learning English from the third grade (age 8-9) and the time allocated is a minimum of 80 minutes per week preferably offered in four short periods. Nevertheless, local educational authorities retain decision-making powers as to when and how many hours are to be allocated. Many large cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, have lowered the provision of English to grade 1 at the age of six. Class size and the number of hours vary from region to region and school to school depending on the local budget and availability of teachers.

The immediate challenge facing primary English is the supply of qualified teachers. Primary school teachers used to be qualified by completing a two-year special training course on the chosen subject matter from a teacher training school or from what is called a normal school. In recent years, there has been an upgraded qualification requirement for all primary school teachers to complete at least a three-year training course on a chosen subject in a normal college. As a result, those two-year normal schools were either closed down or upgraded to three-year teacher training colleges. As far as primary foreign language teachers are concerned, because English had not been a required subject on the national curriculum in the past, there was very little specialised primary language teaching provision in teacher training colleges.

Since 2001 there have been some newly established degree programmes which offer three-year diplomas in teaching English to young learners in different provinces and also through distance learning programmes set up by Central Radio and Television University. In-service teacher training on the new curriculum began in 2001 with a focus on understanding the guiding principles and new requirements specified by the new curriculum. Demonstration lessons on how to use new textbooks are also used. It is required by all levels of educational authorities that teachers need to be trained before they start teaching under the new curriculum. The most common

practices of in-service teacher training take the form of public lessons given by more capable teachers. In such cases, two or three good teachers would be asked to offer public lessons and other teachers from the region would come to observe the lessons after which discussions about the lessons observed would be organised to identify good points and areas for improvement. It is also common for those teachers who give the lessons to give a short self-reflection on the lessons given regarding the objectives, the design and the effectiveness.

As there is an immediate shortage of primary English teachers, many schools are recruiting teachers who may not hold a degree or certificate in English but a degree in other subjects with some proof of English proficiency but most of them do not have special qualification for teaching young learners. Also, some on-the-job primary teachers of other subjects who were made redundant because of the continuous fall of the birth rate are transferred to teach English by going through short training courses. Therefore, the quality of primary English teachers varies greatly.

2.7 The new National English Curriculum Standards (NECS)

Along with the country's 21st century curriculum innovation across all subjects, a new National English Curriculum Standards (the piloting version) was designed and published in 2001 which integrated primary English in the national curriculum beginning from Year 3, age 8-9. In order to change the teacher-dominated classroom into a more learner-centered classroom, NECS specifies six underlying principles (UPs) for reforming the current English language teaching in schools. The UPs stress that education should aim for promoting quality-oriented education for all students; LAMP (learners-as-main-participants) should be advocated and individual differences be respected; Competence-based objectives are designed for each level with flexibility and adaptability; learning processes that advocate experiential learning and participation are emphasised. Moreover, particular attention is attached to formative assessment and learning resources are expected to be optimised to provide maximal opportunities for learning and using the language. (Refer to Appendix 1 for the six

UP). Based on the underlying principles, the new curriculum states its main task in the curriculum document as follows (my translation):

> The main task for the new English curriculum is to shift from overemphasizing the transmission mode of teaching and learning based on grammar and vocabulary to the development of students' overall ability in language use. The provision of English should attach great importance to activating students' interests in learning, relating the course content to the students' life experiences and cognitive stages of development, promoting learning through their active involvement in the process of experiencing, practising, participating in activities, cooperating with each other and communicating with the language- learning through doing. The overall objective of the course is to develop students' comprehensive language competence by making learning a process during which they form positive attitudes, develop thinking skills, improve cross-cultural awareness and develop autonomous learning strategies so as to gradually become independent learners.
>
> *National English Curriculum Standards for Nine-Year Compulsory Education and Senior High School Education (Ministry of Education, 2001) p.1*

The English curriculum document, instead of using the Western term of LC, proposes LAMP as its guiding philosophy. Although LAMP shares similar philosophical beliefs with LC, it has slight different connotation from LC (see 2.3). This also illustrates national differences in the use of terms as noted by Rixon (1992:77).

From what is postulated in the new curriculum as illustrated in the underlying principles and the main task for the new curriculum, we can see that China, for thousands of years, as a culture of preserving high respect for authority and knowledge, is now undergoing a shift of paradigm towards emphasizing students' needs. Different from the aims and requirements specified in the 1993 English Syllabus for Nine-year Compulsory Education (Ministry of Education, 1993), which prioritises the development of language knowledge and skills, NECS clearly indicate a change of priority from knowledge and skills to caring for students' whole person development calling for attention to learners' interests and motivation and respecting individual differences. It is specifically stated in UP2 that classroom teaching should become a process during which 'students are guided by the teacher in constructing knowledge, developing skills, being active in thinking, demonstrating personal

characters, developing intelligence and broadening their views and visions' (UPs-2). Education for all is also clearly stated, which means that every child has the right to attend school and to be attended to and that all teaching is to be carried out according to individual ability and interests instead of only enabling the most capable. Teachers should be flexible in selecting teaching methods, in using resources and ways of assessment so as to make learning accessible to all students. As far as teaching methodology is concerned, although no specific method is recommended, learning through experience, learning by discovery, learning to develop metacognitive strategies, as well as the use of formative assessment are all advocated (see UPs-2, UPs-4 and Ups-5 in Appendix 1).

The two connected new English curricula (English Curriculum for Nine-year Compulsory Education (Revised Version), (MOE, forthcoming) and English Curriculum for Senior High School Education (MOE, 2003) are designed with competence-based descriptions and divided into nine levels covering from primary 3 to senior high school. For the primary phase, competence-based standards are organised around strands that are expected to meet children's needs and characteristics of learning and they are stated in two-year blocks. Level 1, which covers primary grades 3 and 4 (beginning level), includes strands of 'listen and do', 'speak and sing', 'read and write', 'play and perform', 'audio and visual'. Level 2, which covers primary grades 5 and 6, includes strands of 'listening', 'speaking', 'reading', 'writing' and 'play and perform, audio and visual' (see Appendix 2 for details). The levels for the primary phase are designed in such a way to avoid teaching the language for the sake of it but for children's overall development. All textbooks are required to be written according to the new curriculum and have to pass the review by MOE before they are recommended to schools. By 2004, there were around thirty titles of primary English textbooks approved and recommended to schools.

However, curriculum change is a long and slow process simply because 'policy and practice are not synonyms' (Alexander, 2000:75). The curriculum document only

expresses aims and objectives in abstract and general terms and they are often described in the form of standards and general guidelines based on theoretical assumptions. Such general principles will have to go through a sequence of transformations before they are translated from published document into school textbooks and from teacher beliefs into classroom practice which is often governed or affected by the particular social, cultural, institutional as well as classroom contexts where teaching takes place.

2.8 Summary

In this chapter, background information was provided for a better understanding of the context in which this study was undertaken. It first presented the international trend of primary foreign language provision and China's recent initiatives in educational reform as a result of rapid national and international social, economic and technological advancement. Then, details about the country's basic educational policy and administrative system as well as the new agenda on primary English provision with reference to the latest curriculum reform were provided. As the cultural traditions and the social-economic context in China are very different from where the notion of LC is originated, a systematic study is needed to reveal how Chinese primary EFL teachers manage such a paradigm shift and how they struggle to achieve the intended outcome when adapting to the new requirement.

CHAPTER 3 LITERATURE REVIEW

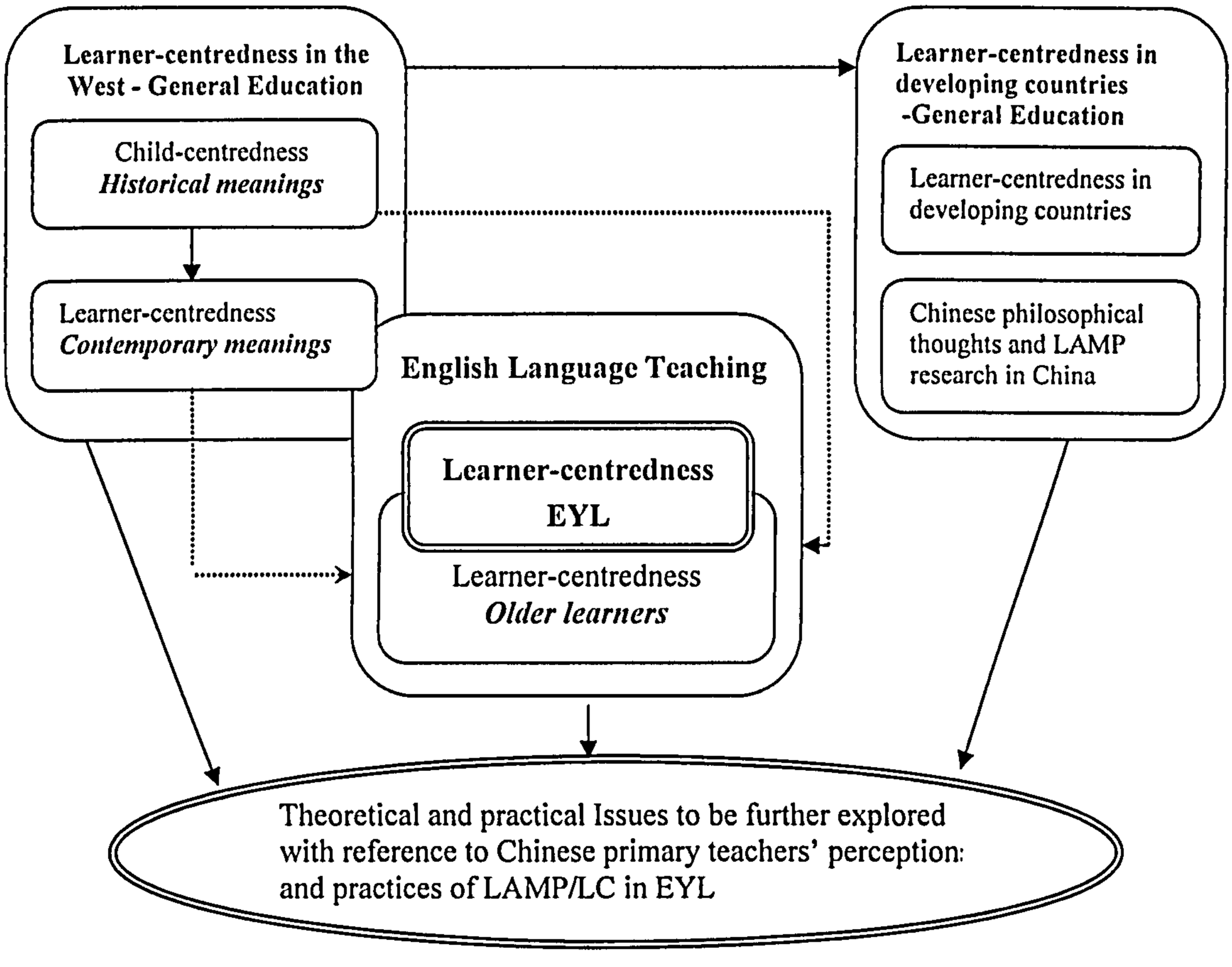
3.1 Introduction

As stated in Chapter 1, the aim of this study is to explore Chinese teachers' perceptions of learner-centred ideologies and related practices in teaching English as a foreign language in Chinese primary schools. This is because such notions have been promoted in the recent curriculum innovation across all school subjects as part of the government's plan to revitalise education in the 21st century. As notions of LC are known to have come from the West, this study involves examining both the historical and contemporary meanings of the Western constructs of the concept and its influences on educational practices both in the West and in developing countries. The purpose of this literature review is to lay a theoretical and practical basis for studying Chinese primary teachers' attitudes towards, their interpretations of, their perceived values and difficulties regarding LAMP/LC and to examine how they possibly mediate such ideologies in classrooms within their particular teaching contexts.

This chapter, therefore, sets out first to explore and describe where Western notions of LC originally came from and how they were formed, refined and transformed into modern terms and then debated and developed to accommodate contemporary concerns in general education. It then moves to look at when and how such notions were picked up by Western professionals in the field of English language teaching (ELT) and how they were first interpreted, discussed and debated in ELT mostly concerning older learners. As the focus of the present study is on teaching English to young learners (EYL), the chapter moves on to look at the literature related to children as language learners in the West and the different routes by which notions of LC entered the EYL world. An examination of implementation of such notions in some developing countries as well as the problems encountered in their educational reforms are also included followed by a review of Chinese philosophical thoughts and related research on LAMP in Chinese general education

before addressing some issues regarding both theories and practices of learner-centred concepts in teaching English to children, the main concern of the current research. Due to complications of all the above interrelated areas of concerns which indicate a complex web of influences from the West to developing countries including China, from general education to ELT, and from teaching English to older learners to teaching English to young learners, the following diagram is provided to help illustrate the focus and scope of dimensions of the current literature review.

Figure 3.1 Focus and scope of dimensions of the literature review



3.2 Historical overview of child-centred education

In this section, the origins of the Western-based concept of child-centredness in general education are explored. This by no means implies that modern and contemporary thinking about LC is a simple repetition of the ideas developed in the past. It is hoped that by tracing the history we are able to understand where we came from so that we are in a better position to see where we are moving towards so as to

examine as well as compare the Chinese primary teachers' perceptions and practices of the concept.

3.2.1 Child-centredness - Origins of the concept

In the West, notions of learner-centred teaching can be seen to reach back as early as Plato's Socratic dialogues (Entwistle, 1970:11; Brodie, Lelliott, and Davis, 2002:542). In these dialogues, LC manifests itself in the strategic questioning through which the teacher draws out the ideas of the student based on his current knowledge and understanding. Socrates, in the form of dialogues, illustrated an early concern with 'scaffolding' (see 3.2.2), believing that a person's latent knowledge needed the guidance of an 'other' who is more knowledgeable to bring it out. Therefore, all that a teacher can do is to help a learner to become aware of his current knowledge, his mistakes, and his limitations. And it is only the student who can bring about the improvement (Perkinson, 1980).

Though such notions of LC have existed for a long time, there was little concern with treating children in a special way until Rousseau's "Emile" was published in 1762, which became the first comprehensive presentation of learner-centred ideas (Entwistle, 1970; Darling, 1994, Tabulawa, 2003). The fundamental principle that runs throughout 'Emile' is that children have their 'own ways of seeing, thinking and feeling' and we should not try to teach them in a way we as adults see, think and feel (Rousseau, 1762: 54). Children are interested in finding things out for themselves, so education should allow children opportunities to discover things and draw conclusions from their own experiences and they should not be forced to learn things that are beyond their grasp (Darling, 1994). Rousseau criticises conventional education as a failure in directing children's attention to matters utterly remote from their minds, providing no opportunities for children to reason for themselves and putting children in an environment where they can be neither happy nor free (Rousseau, 1762). He states 'it matters little what he learns; it does matter that he should do nothing against his will' (p.135). With such an understanding, education is not a matter of teaching knowledge but developing children's interests and ways of

learning with their desire to learn. For Rousseau, this is the basic principle for any good education. In his words, the school should be made to fit the child rather than the other way round and the curriculum should be determined by children's interests and needs (ibid). Furthermore, Rousseau recognises the fact that individual children vary, therefore education needs to be individualised so as to meet their individual needs and level of development (Darling, 1994).

According to Entwistle (1970), it was with Rousseau that there entered into education a completely new way of thinking. This new thinking of education, based on children's individual interests, their natural stages of development with an emphasis on first-hand experience and individual differences, was taken forward by later writers such as Pestalozzi (1746-1827) and Froebel (1782-1852) among others.

Inspired by Rousseau, Pestalozzi continued to stress that education should be for the child not the child for education and he strongly criticised the education of his time for expecting too much of the child and forcing the child to learn in a miserable way without attending to individual needs (Heafford, 1967). Pestalozzi stresses that education should take full account of what the child is capable of achieving mentally, physically and intellectually. He claims that 'all instruction of man is then only the Art* of helping Nature to develop in her own way; and this Art rests essentially on the relation and harmony between the impressions received by the child and the exact degree of his developed powers' (Pestalozzi, 1898:57). In other words, 'to instruct men is nothing more than to help human nature to develop in its own way, and the art of instruction depends primarily on harmonizing our message and the demands we make upon the child with his powers at the moment' (Green, 1912:87, cf. Darling, 1994:18). The child should learn through activity and through things. He should be free to pursue his own interests and draw his own conclusions. He should not be made anxious under stress, and his development should not be forced (Green, 1914; Heafford, 1967; Darling, 1994). While advocating the need for the child to proceed at his own pace and recognizing the fact that the ability of children could vary

* 'Art' refers to the Science and Art of Education rather than art generally.

considerably, Pestalozzi valued the instructional role of the teacher and was in favour of firm discipline in the classroom and believed in the value of hard work (Heafford, 1967).

Different from Rousseau, who presented his ideas of education in a novel focusing on an individual child cut off from society, Pestalozzi recognised the importance of education to all and realised that education is the key to the improvement of social conditions (Green, 1914; Heafford, 1967; Darling, 1994). He also gave some thought to how such educational ideas can be put into practice for broader implementation by stressing that there should be a sequence in the instruction given to children 'so that beginning and progress should keep pace with the beginning and progress of the powers to be developed in the child' (Pestalozzi, 1898:58). He also valued the use of picture books and real objects to create visual experiences for learning and proposed the use of textbooks for teaching and learning as he recognised that few teachers were experts and some teachers were ignorant. He believed that well-designed textbooks could help solve the problems (ibid).

The first person who explicitly used the term 'child-centred' was said to be Froebel, (Chung and Walsh, 2000). Inspired by Rousseau as well as Pestalozzi, Froebel earnestly devoted himself to this 'new education' (Lawrence, 1952:21). He believed that schooling should fit children's natural stages of development (Lilly, 1967; Darling, 1994; Chung and Walsh, 2000). Because young children think and learn differently from older children and adults, 'schooling for young children must differ from that for older children and adults' (Chung and Welsh, 2000:217). Furthermore, Froebel stresses that 'every human being, even as a child, must be recognised, acknowledged, and fostered as a necessary and essential member of humanity' (Froebel, 1886, cf. Lawrence, 1952:21). He stated that children should be regarded and cared for like plants: 'Given the right conditions they would grow and unfold' (Lawrence, 1952:195). The role of the teacher, therefore, is to provide the right conditions for children's growth. In other words, creating a positive learning environment was seen an important factor for children to learn. Moreover, he sees

children's play as a form of creative activity and such creative work can be a means to knowledge (Darling, 1994). Froebel states:

> Play, therefore, must not be left to chance. Just because he learns through play a child learns willingly and learns much. So play, like learning and activity, had its own definite period of time and it must not be left out of the elementary curriculum. The educator must not only guide the play, since it is so important, but he must also often teach this sort of play in the first instance.
>
> (Lilley, 1967:167)

With his concern about the crucial function of play, Froebel began to devise some concrete techniques such as simple toys to be used as teaching equipment to translate his principles into practice. Froebel's elaboration on child-centred education had a strong impact in education in Europe as well as in America in the late 19th and early 20th century with lectures and exhibitions organised and the Froebel Society formed (Lawrence, 1952; Darling, 1994).

3.2.2 Child-centredness - Modern developments

As we can see from the above discussion, the central tenets of child-centred views lie in the respect for children's natural interests, their natural developmental stages, learning through experience and discovery, the recognition of the function of play in learning, and individual differences of each child. These ideas were revisited, reformulated, as well as further developed by later writers such as Dewey (1859-1952), Piaget (1896-1980), Vygotsky (1896-1934), Bruner, Donaldson and many others in the 20th century. Dewey (1956b) likened this new approach to education to Copernican revolution. He states:

> In traditional education, 'the center of gravity is outside the child. It is in the teacher, the textbook, anywhere and everywhere you please except in the immediate instincts and activities of the child himself...Now the change which is coming into our education is the shifting of the center of gravity. It is a change, a revolution, not unlike that introduced by Copernicus when the astronomical center shifted from the earth to the sun. In this case the child becomes the sun about which the appliances of education revolve; he is the center about which they are organised' (p.34).

Different from Rousseau, who saw the education of a child in an ideal and isolated environment virtually with no history and social relationships (Entwistle, 1970), Dewey (1956a; 1956b) believed that schools are necessary arrangements for learning and school should not be separated from society. Instead, they should reflect the real life of society. He agrees with Rousseau that children are different from adults and education should meet the needs and developmental stages of children, but he disagrees with him on the value of a pedagogy which just stirs up children's interests 'without directing it towards definite achievement' (Dewey, 1956a:16). Dewey argues for a pedagogy which should 'get hold of the child's natural impulses and instincts, and to utilise them so that the child is carried on to a higher plane of perception and judgement, and equipped with more efficient habits; so that the child has an enlarged and deepened consciousness and increased control of powers of action' (ibid:127-128). Dewey stresses that if such a result is not reached, play would simply be an amusement to children with no function in promoting educational growth. In other words, learning should not be simply in the form of play but in play which fosters reflection and understanding through scientific enquiry (Alexander, 2000). Dewey believes that children need experience and affection, as well as various activities as conditions for learning. Learning for children is a process of active thinking and problem solving (Dewey, 1956b).

With regard to the teacher's roles in child-centred education, Dewey insists that learning should be directed and it should not be left to the child to grow out of his free will. For Dewey, the central question of education is how to take hold of the child's interests and give them direction. 'Through direction, through organised use, they tend toward valuable results, instead of scattering or being left to merely impulsive expression' (Dewey, 1956b:36).

Dewey further argues that the development of the child and the implementation of the curriculum should not be viewed as opponents to each other. He warns teachers to guard against the danger with this 'new education' to simply 'let children think things out for themselves without supplying any of the environing conditions which

are requisite to start and guide thought. Nothing can be developed from nothing' (Dewey, 1956a:18). For Dewey, it is the child, not the curriculum that should be at the center of the school (ibid).

The claims made by Rousseau, Froebel and Dewey that all children follow a natural sequence of development were further intensified by Piaget. As a result of extensive experiments and tests, he maintained that children's cognitive development follows four biologically based phases with each representing a different way of achieving material and rational thought (Turner, 1975; Wood, 1998). The major implication is that the effectiveness of teaching depends on children's readiness to assimilate and accommodate new information. Until the child is ready, it is futile to try to teach. Piaget's works led to the initial formation of the constructivist theory. According to Piaget, children acquire understanding of the world about them primarily through an analysis of their own actions upon the world not by imitation or memorisation, although these factors make contributions (Piaget, 1970). In other words, every learner constructs his or her knowledge by actively making sense of the world around him/her as opposed to receiving ideas from a teacher or an authority complete and correct. Learning is an internal and personal process largely obtained from first-hand experiences and from communication with other people (Selley, 1999). Therefore, each individual is regarded as an active agent in his own learning environment (Turner, 1975) and he constructs new knowledge based on what is already known (Marshall, 2000).

Although Piaget accepts that social experiences and inter-personal communication are an important factor for children's cognitive development, they play a rather limited role in his theory as they are conditioned by children's readiness at a particular stage of cognitive development (Wood, 1998). In contrast to Piaget's concept of the isolated individual learner, both Vygotsky and Bruner offered a way of conceptualizing the learning process in a social context, adding an interactive dimension to effective learning. For Vygotsky, the child is not an isolated learner in a world of objects but an active discoverer or participant in a world full of other people

with whom he/she interacts to gain experiences and understanding of the world around him/her (Cameron, 2001). Therefore, Vygotsky is often associated with the socio-constructivist theory (Wood, 1998, Cameron, 2001). Vygotsky (1962, 1978) emphasises interaction and engagement with learning tasks in a social context through language based on the concept of 'Zone of Proximal Development' (ZPD). In his words, this means 'the discrepancy between a child's mental age and the level he reaches in solving problems with assistance' (Vygotsky, 1962:103). He states that 'with assistance, every child, can do more than he can by himself – though only within the limits set by the state of his development' (ibid). That is to say, learning can best be achieved through the dynamic interaction between the teacher and the learner and between learners. With the teacher's help through questions and explanations or with more capable peers' support, the learner can move to a higher level of understanding with extended skills and knowledge. Through discussion with others – where ideas are shared, challenged, negotiated, and justified – new levels of conceptual understanding can be reached (Edwards and Mercer, 1987; Vygotsky, 1978). The implication of Vygotsky's ZPD is that the teacher plays a crucial role in helping the child in learning by providing a bridge between what is known and what is to be learned instead of leaving the child alone to figure things out for himself. Children should be given opportunities to actively participate and contribute to their own learning guided by the teacher and gradually take on more responsibility for their own learning (Wood, 1998). Bruner (1977), along with Vygotsky, stressed the importance of teacher's roles in children's learning and the nature of interaction in the learning environment. He coined the term 'scaffolding' to illustrate that the tasks of adults are to assist children's understanding across the zone of proximal development through carefully structured learning tasks and the use of language.

3.2.3 Child-centred practices in the West in the 20th century

The following presents the principles and practices of child-centred ideology in the West during the first three quarters of the 20th century with a focus on the US and

with whom he/she interacts to gain experiences and understanding of the world around him/her (Cameron, 2001). Therefore, Vygotsky is often associated with the socio-constructivist theory (Wood, 1998, Cameron, 2001). Vygotsky (1962, 1978) emphasises interaction and engagement with learning tasks in a social context through language based on the concept of 'Zone of Proximal Development' (ZPD). In his words, this means 'the discrepancy between a child's mental age and the level he reaches in solving problems with assistance' (Vygotsky, 1962:103). He states that 'with assistance, every child, can do more than he can by himself – though only within the limits set by the state of his development' (ibid). That is to say, learning can best be achieved through the dynamic interaction between the teacher and the learner and between learners. With the teacher's help through questions and explanations or with more capable peers' support, the learner can move to a higher level of understanding with extended skills and knowledge. Through discussion with others – where ideas are shared, challenged, negotiated, and justified – new levels of conceptual understanding can be reached (Edwards and Mercer, 1987; Vygotsky, 1978). The implication of Vygotsky's ZPD is that the teacher plays a crucial role in helping the child in learning by providing a bridge between what is known and what is to be learned instead of leaving the child alone to figure things out for himself. Children should be given opportunities to actively participate and contribute to their own learning guided by the teacher and gradually take on more responsibility for their own learning (Wood, 1998). Bruner (1977), along with Vygotsky, stressed the importance of teacher's roles in children's learning and the nature of interaction in the learning environment. He coined the term 'scaffolding' to illustrate that the tasks of adults are to assist children's understanding across the zone of proximal development through carefully structured learning tasks and the use of language.

3.2.3 Child-centred practices in the West in the 20th century

The following presents the principles and practices of child-centred ideology in the West during the first three quarters of the 20th century with a focus on the US and

the UK followed by a brief account of their respective educational reforms in the last quarter of the century.

3.2.3.1 The practices of child-centred ideology in the US and UK in the first three quarters of the 20th century

By 1940, the ideals of progressive education under the influence of Froebel and Dewey became prevalent in the rhetoric of American education (Ravitch, 1983, cf. Alexander, 2000), which focused on identifying the needs of the individual child and constructing educational contexts which supported individual interests by identifying children's differences with a curriculum designed to meet the natural order of the development of the child (Vadeboncoeur, 1997). The main principles were summarised by Kliebard (1986:191, cf. Vadeboncoeur, 1997:19) as follows: 'The aim of Progressive Education is the freest and fullest development of the individual, based upon the scientific study of his physical, mental, spiritual, and social characteristics and needs'. Based on these principles, teachers had to learn to struggle between the old-fashioned, subject-centred, authoritarian traditional school and the modern, child-centred, flexible, democratic, progressive school. The Progressive Education Association was formed in 1919 with the sole purpose of applying the theories of John Dewey in advancing educational reform (Pulliam and Van Pattern, 1995). Dewey's influence on American education brought fundamental changes in the way education was conceived and there emerged new thoughts about schooling and new patterns of classroom life (Darling, 1994), with public schools extended to nearly all Americans (Lawrence, 1952).

The influence of child-centred ideology on British education was for a long time rather limited. It became popular during the 1920s to 1930s in infant education under the influence of the Froebel society and Dewey's writings (The Open University, 1984a) but it was not until the 1960s that the philosophy of child-centredness was publicly endorsed by official reports in Britain of which the best known are *Primary Education in Scotland* or the Primary Memorandum (SED, 1965) which claimed to be very much based on Piaget's works, and *Children and their Primary Schools* or

The Plowden Report (CACE, 1967), which was said to be influenced more by ideas from Rousseau, Dewey and Vygotsky. The latter contains the well-known rubric, 'At the heart of the educational process lies the child' (Para.9). These two official documents noted above were considered landmarks in the development of child-centred education in Britain (Darling, 1994). The following extracts from both the Primary Memorandum (SED, 1965) and the Plowden Report (CACE, 1967), can be said to capture most of the elements in child-centred education:

> At the heart of the educational process lies the child. No advances in policy, no acquisition of new equipment have their desired effect unless they are in harmony with the nature of the child, unless they are fundamentally acceptable to him (CACE, 1967: Para. 9)
>
> It is vital that these individual differences should be recognised and catered for in all spheres of the child's activities in school. The teacher's methods and organisation should be sufficiently flexible to allow each child to progress at an appropriate pace, and to achieve satisfaction and success at his own level (SED, 1965:4)
>
> (a) Individual differences between children of the same age are so great that any class, however, homogeneous it seems, must always be treated as a body of children needing individual and different attention. (b) Until a child is ready to take a particular step forward, it is a waste of time to try to teach him to take it (CACE, 1967: Para. 75).
>
> It is now recognised that learning occurs most effectively when the learner is personally involved in purposeful activity which captures his interest or arises from it. Consequently the emphasis in primary education is now more on learning by the pupil than on instruction by the teacher (SED, 1965:60)
>
> 'Finding out' has proved to be better for children than 'being told' (CACE, 1967: Para.1233).
>
> Emotional, social and intellectual aspects are closely intertwined in mental growth: the child is a total personality. Emotional life provides the spur and in many ways gives meaning to experience (CACE, 1967: Para.65).
>
> The curriculum is not to be thought of as a number of discrete subjects, each requiring a specific allocation of time each week or each month. Indeed, it is quite impossible to treat the subjects of the curriculum in isolation from one another if education is to be meaningful to the child (SED, 1965:37)

As we can see from the above, common principles advocated include the ideas that education should be compatible to children's nature and their natural pace of development; teaching should be individualised to meet children's differences; teaching and learning should provide a wide range of experiences for children to learn actively and creatively through play and discovery method; the curriculum should be integrated; every child should be cared for and respected, etc. All these reflect almost all the historical meanings of child-centredness and have instigated some fundamental changes in the way education was perceived and conducted before the 1960s with children seated at their desks and treated as the passive recipients of knowledge provided by teachers (Darling, 1994). Also, 'the idea of education which caters for each child's interests suggests designing a curriculum which allows choices between different activities to the child's actual preferences' (Darling, 1986: 37).

The following table based on Bell (1981:17, cf. The Open University, 1984b:31) and Bennett (1976: 38) illustrates the main characteristics of the progressive versus the traditional approaches to education. The progressive features represent the fullest expression of child-centred practices promoted in England during the 1960s and 70s.

Figure 3 2 Features of child-centred and traditional approaches to education

	Progressive	Traditional
1	Emphasises interest and play	Emphasises knowledge and work
2	Emphasises learning by discovery	Emphasises direct teaching
3	Emphasises pupil active roles	Accept pupil passive roles
4	Emphasises creative expressions	Emphasises factual learning
5	Integrated subject matter	Separate subject matter
6	Rejects rigid forms of control	Emphasises overt control
7	Emphasises intrinsic motivation more than external rewards	Depends much on external rewards
8	Pupils participate in decision-making in the process of learning	Decision-making is firmly in the teacher's hands.
9	Pupils work cooperatively	Pupils work in competition with each other
10	There is little testing used	Regular testing is used
11	Emphasises that all children are equal and teacher respects each individual	Favours only the able children and believes in strict streaming
12	Uses 'open plan' classrooms with no rigid physical boundaries dividing one learning group from another	Uses separate, enclosed rooms for each class and teacher
13	Teacher as guide to educational experiences of the children	Teacher as distributor of knowledge

Based on Bell (1981:17, cf. Open University, 1984b:31) and Bennett (1976: 38)

3.2.3.2 How far was child-centredness implemented in practice?

Despite the fact that progressive education became prevalent in rhetoric, a gap between public rhetoric and classroom practice was identified (Alexander, 2000). One of the studies done by Cuban in 1993 examining constancy and change in American classrooms from1880-1990, found that teacher-centred practices remained robust despite a number of reforms, particularly in secondary schools, although a small number of elementary classrooms were identified as developing some learner-centred practices in terms of using group work and allowing children the freedom to move around in the classroom but not in terms of joint decision-making about methodology or activities. In general, 'the teacher remains in control of knowledge production allowing only limited flexibility in working arrangement' (Cuban, 1993, cf. Brodie, Lelliott, and Davis, 2002:545). In a comparative study on primary education in five countries, Alexander (2000) identified some elements of child-centredness in American classrooms with more differentiated groupings and tasks. However, it was also found that as teachers interact with groups and individuals more than with the whole class, they lost contact time with the rest of the class for those periods. Moreover, American (as well as British) lessons were rather loosely structured with children spending quite a lot of time waiting for teachers' attention as individuals and for every child attended to there were others who received no attention in a teacher-pupil one-to-one tuition. As a result, individualism had led to complex attempts to deliver instruction on an individual basis through multiple targeted learning tasks and complex group strategies. Hawkins, (1985) states that what is most disheartening is that test scores showed that academic achievements declined for students from all socio-economic levels and parents from all socio-economic groups started trying to send their children to private schools as public education was perceived as 'public bad'(p.29).

During the 1960s, 1970s, and the 1980s in England, child-centred education or progressive education become the 'primaryspeak' in the public language of primary education (Alexander, 1995:8). However, when we come to examine the actual

implementation of child-centred education and its effectiveness in Britain from 1930s to 1970s, it is quite surprising that child-centred education in its pure form was implemented to a fairly limited extent (Alexander, 1984). Alexander (2000) concludes that in English primary classrooms, although there is a lot of talking going on in classrooms by both teachers and children, 'its function is seen as primarily social rather than cognitive, and as 'helpful' to learning rather than as fundamental to it' (p.566). A number of studies carried out in England (e.g. Bennett, 1976; Galton *et al,* 1980; Aitkin, Bennett, and Hesketh, 1981), using various research methods from questionnaire surveys to classroom observations, found that only a very small percentage of the teaching investigated seemed to belong to the most 'progressive' and the rest was either 'mixed' or 'largely traditional' with the conclusion that 'progressive teaching is less prevalent than has hitherto been supposed' (Bennett, 1976:54). Similarly, Galton *et al.*'s (1980) study found that the kind of individualised teaching resulted in only very limited interaction time between the teacher and each individual child and the promotion of enquiry or discovery learning appeared almost non existent. Also, children were seen sitting in groups but often doing their own individual work. The study found that teachers were neither progressive nor traditional. Simon (1981), based on a review of a number of studies carried out to assess the effectiveness of child-centredness, concluded that there was 'little evidence there of any fundamental shift either in the content of education or in the procedures of teaching and learning, in the sense that didacticism still largely prevails' (p.24). Even Plowden itself had found barely 10 per cent of schools which conformed to its full vision (Simon, 1981; Alexander, 2000). In summary, child-centred teaching has never been fully implemented despite the rhetoric and it has always had its detractors.

3.2.3.3 The change of tide in British education

When Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Government was elected in 1979, moves towards strengthening central control of the curriculum and weakening teacher autonomy were well under way (Alexander, 1984; Pollard *et al.* 1994), leading to the change of tide in education. The requirement of the 1988 National Curriculum clearly

challenged classroom procedures which had been promoted during the 1960s and suggested a return to the basics with a more didactic approach to education (Simon, 1994:14) despite the fact that there was no real shift away from didacticism in practice but more so rhetorically. This change of tide was signaled clearly by the Department of Education and Science (DES) in 1981 that 'The school curriculum is at the heart of education' (DES, 1981, cf. Alexander, 1984:5). Child-centred education was equated with low expectations, undemanding teaching and underachievement according to research studies done during the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s (Alexander, 2000). Alexander *et al.*'s paper (1992) advised a move towards subject-based teaching and also more whole-class teaching with the benefits of sustaining good order, and ensuring clear purpose and concentration of learning.

The introduction of the national curriculum marked an abrupt change of direction in education by the British government from centring on the child to centring on the curriculum. Raising standards across the whole curriculum became the main concern. Along with the new curriculum, the separation of literacy and math began to be instigated to make sure the basics were attended to and a whole package of assessment targets was developed for each key stage. All these were based on the assumption that school education had lost touch with 'the real world' (Darling, 1994: vii), unable to produce the right product needed for the economic and technological development. The introduction of the reform was also based on studies of what had happened in Eastern countries such as China and Japan in their high ranking in the international league tables for their success in school math teaching. Whole class teaching was thus given more value (e.g. Alexander, 2000). It is believed that both the educational processes and products need to be improved through a system of attainment targets and a testing system for all students and child-centred principles and practices were seen as defective in helping students to achieve high standards in order to meet the needs of the rapid social and economic development. At present, the National Curriculum, Standards of attainments, assessment and tests, and school League tables have occupied the rhetoric of school Education in England and Wales.

3.2.3.4 Recent trends in educational reform in the United States

Just like what has happened in Britain, America is also turning away from child-centredness to give more concern to students' academic achievements. According to Alexander (2000:104-5), in the last two decades of the twentieth century, there was an obvious increase in state and federal intervention in educational matters in the United States in terms of attainments achieved by students. The first wave of educational reform to raise standards began in 1983 signaled by the report *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). It sets out six goals for the year 2000 in order to raise standards. This was said to be the most comprehensive attempt at systemic educational reform to that date. The report attributed the educational problems to low academic standards and poor quality of instruction. Solutions from the top-down by the government required improvement by raising achievement standards. These reform efforts targeted an increase in the number of math and science classes, stiffer high school graduation requirements, tougher qualifications and requirements for teachers, and increased frequency of testing and assessment of students, etc. (Lambert and McCombs, 1997). By the late 1990s, national assessments were strengthened with particular attention to reading and writing (Alexander, 2000). As the educational system in the United States has been a decentralised one, each state was to develop its own tests to measure progress towards the state-level standards with reference to the national standards. However, the lesson that seems to be learned by educationalists and policy-makers is that solutions to solve educational problems need to help every student succeed to the highest level possible both academically and non-academically (Lambert and McCombs, 1997). The result was that throughout 1990s, learner-centred pedagogy was challenged in countries like the UK and the US, and there has been a move back to traditional whole class teaching (Alexander, 2003).

3.2.4 Child-centredness – Criticisms

As we can see from the previous discussion, child-centred ideology had a strong impact on American and British education during the late 19th and most part of the

20th century but there has recently been a breaking-away from it by the two countries. This was because the ideology was under serious attack by some scholars and philosophers. To Entwistle (1970), the term child-centredness has become 'a slogan with all the potential for promoting change and creating misunderstanding...' (p.11). He also noted that many theorists as well as practitioners rallied around different schools for or against child-centredness and some of the emphases upon the child have been subject to sustained criticisms, provoking a critical, even hostile, reception from many. Along similar lines, Olson and Bruner (1996) called child-centred 'a not very meaningful term at best'. They say that it is 'a politically useful code word giving loosely affiliated groups a common identity' (p.19). They also point out that the term has complex and contradictory underlying assumptions about children and their learning. Tabulawa (2003) even critically sees the term as a disguise for Western aid agencies to sell their ideology of individualism and democracy to developing countries as he, like Holliday (1994b), believes that there does not exist a universal pedagogy which works with equal effectiveness irrespective of the context. The following focuses on the main criticisms of child/learner-centred education.

The first criticism centres on freedom versus discipline and self-directed interest versus authoritative knowledge. The opponents criticise child-centred education for giving too much freedom to children, making them unwilling to accept reasonable authority and letting their individual impulses lead their actions resulting in discipline problems. It is also criticised that with an exclusive emphasis on the child and his freedom, the curriculum may be ignored and also the mastery of human knowledge and skills which require hard work as well as disciplined applications may be forgotten (ibid). Darling (1986) argues that it is clearly not enough to just recognise what children's interests are. We must also know what kind of interests we would like them to have and how such interests can be developed through education. Similarly, Oelkers (2002) criticises Rousseau for taking for granted that the self-development of the child is driven by immediate interests not by instruction.

The second criticism falls on the paradox between the individual and society. Entwistle (1970) points out that in both political and educational theories there is 'a well established assumption that society stands opposed to the individual; that social education is a threat to the individual integrity' and for this very fact child-centredness is the focus of much criticism (p.32), because with 'an appreciation of children as individuals' the focus is less on 'what each might become and more on what each already is', contradicting children's natural growth and development with social needs and development (Darling,1994:2). Similarly, Edwards and Mercer (1987:170) criticise child-centred ideology for overemphasising the individual at the expense of the social. Hutchinson and Waters (1984:108) argued that education should be geared not only to the learners themselves, but to 'all the parties concerned'. To Graddol (2006), all these parties, such as learners' families, textbook publishers, and examination providers, are becoming more complex nowadays as they may all have very different views and expectations about how education should be provided.

On a practical level, it has been criticised for giving too much emphasis to the uniqueness of each individual child, which has led to too great an attention to '*individualised* teaching'. If each child needs to be treated individually, it is argued, the complexity of classroom organisation can become overwhelming, while, at the same time, it becomes impossible to develop effective pedagogic means relevant to the needs of children in general (Simon, 1994:14; original emphasis), just as what Darling (1994:5) states:

> 'If twenty or thirty children were all pursuing individual interests, it would be difficult for a teacher to support and monitor their learning or to accommodate the enlarged freedom which these activities would require'.

In fact, to many teachers, it is simply too naive to think that they should not worry about what to teach and how to teach but just let children be self-directed and learn what they want to learn.

The third criticism is leveled at the claim that all children follow a natural sequence of development repeatedly stressed by many writers such as Rousseau,

Froebel and Dewey and further intensified by Piaget. The validity of the theory and the way it is used particularly by Piaget were challenged by some scholars and researchers in education (e.g. Donaldson, 1978; Alexander, 1984; Wood, 1998). Donaldson (1978) was critical of the tasks constructed and the ambiguity of the language used in Piaget's tests, thus the validity of the results. By modifying the way tasks were designed and the instructions given with the same intention to test children's ability to reason, Donaldson and other researchers proved that even very young children showed capability of deductive reasoning and abstract thinking. She argued that Piaget's theory on children's stages of development was not only inaccurate but also damaging as it had had a direct impact on the everyday practice of many teachers in primary teaching resulting in an underestimation of children's capabilities in logical thinking. It also led to the neglect of individual differences or uniqueness of each child, which is in contradiction with the basic ideology of child-centred education (Desforges and McNamara, 1979, cf. Alexander, 1984).

The fourth criticism focuses on the neglect of the teacher's roles. In child-centred education, with the emphasis shifted to the child, there is an obvious play-down of the teachers' roles. Some educational philosophers, such as Peters and Dearden, are strongly critical of learner-centred ideology for its neglect of teachers' roles and the lack of recognition of instructions (Darling, 1994). Some critics strongly argue for the teacher's role as authority. They believe that children are not without limitations, it is the teacher's responsibility to assess and guide their spontaneous and unguided choices of activity. Also, the teacher has a disciplinary role to encourage insistence and efforts in learning. 'To ignore the teacher's legitimate disciplinary function is to assume that the child has the capacity to discipline himself from the start, thus making schooling redundant' (Entwistle, 1970: 208).

King (1978, cf. Alexander, 1984:16) criticises the Plowden Report by arguing that there are 34 entries on 'learning' but none on 'teaching' in the index of the report. The questions he asks are: isn't teaching a process which is to bring about learning? What is a paid primary teacher supposed to be doing except 'teaching'? With a stress

on good climate and interpersonal relations, child-centred rhetoric effectively diminishes the importance of teachers' tasks on developing purposeful and valuable activities to achieve curriculum goals. Alexander (1984) strongly argues that 'the emotional commitment to an ideal is no substitute for intellectual engagement' (p.15).

Some scholars in language teaching hold similar reservations. For example, O'Neill (1991) argues for the teacher-centred approach by saying that people take a wrong assumption about teacher-centred approach. They often ignore the likely effects of the teacher and his/her instruction on the learner. He believes that what usually happens in good 'teacher-centred' lessons is that 'teachers are starting from and paying close attention to those factors in a lesson they believe will promote learning and which are *most directly under their control'* (p.301*)* (Original emphasis) and he calls for the 'importance of doing ordinary things well' (p.293). Wong-Fillmore (1985) found that 'by and large, the most successful classes for language learning were the ones that made the greatest use of teacher-directed activities' and classes that 'made heavy use of individual work were among those found to be among the least successful for language learning' (p.24). Holliday (1994a) also explicitly criticises learner-centred ideology for its lack of recognition of the roles played by the teacher. He makes the point that teachers play a key role in ensuring learning and they are also very important participants in the classroom. They possess a great deal of knowledge about the subject matter, the requirements from the curriculum, and about the needs of their students in their social context. He calls for teachers from other cultural and teaching contexts to reflect on and develop teaching techniques 'to suit *real* classrooms' (original emphasis) rather than to meet the standards of the borrowed notions (p.9).

Last but not least, criticism has focused on the practicality of child-centred education as it was treated much as an inspiration and the reality failed to provide much evidence in its implementation as discussed in 3.2.3.3. As a result, a general belief is formed, that is, child-centred principles are fine in theory but not so fine in practice (Perkinson, 1980:198). Alexander (2000:141) noted that 'while the language

of primary education may have changed out of all recognition, the practice changed rather less'. One problem is that the theory does not entail specific practices and therefore, child-centredness has to take on many different forms in practice ranging from extremely child-centred to not at all child-centred as Bennett's (1976) study showed. The other problem is that with child-centred ideologies, teaching is expected to be organised by principles other than standards of attainment but teachers and teaching are often judged by examination passes, thus making actual implementation difficult (The Open University, 1984a:24). Moreover, teachers do not have 'the time, energy, imagination, intelligence, or patience; even if they do, they lack the freedom, the opportunity, the resources, and the support necessary to conduct such experiments' (Perkinson, 1980:198). Moreover, some people argue that child-centred education is simply not practical in real classrooms for it is more expensive as it requires more resources to enable learners to take responsibilities for much of their own learning and it requires a low pupil-teacher ratio in order to meet individual needs (The Open University, 1984a). Many teachers complain that Dewey 'had an unrealistic conception of the real situation in an ongoing educational system' and 'his proposals for education demand highly imaginative, intelligent, sophisticated teachers – super teachers; and highly imaginative, intelligent, sophisticated students – super students. They also demand ideal schools with administrators and parents who are understanding, supportive and enabling' (Perkinson, 1980:198).

Simon (1981) concludes with his review of a number of studies that it was the rhetoric not the reality that had impressed the public as if a revolution had swept away the traditional practice while in reality limited changes had actually taken place. Thus the trendy ideology existed more in the rhetoric than in any reality (Alexander, 1984, 2000; Yandell 2003).What is more, the same rhetoric espoused by many often ends up with a variety of practices, some of which are 'totally inconsistent with the rhetoric' (Alexander (1984:14).

To summarise at this point, we can see clearly that the complexity of the subject comes to the fore. Unlike in the days of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Froebel, when

there was a more ordered progression of child-centred ideology with each person revisiting as well as adding ideas, we find ourselves now in a rather rich but messy state with different emphasis, confusions and contradictory interpretations. Next, we will move on to examine how the concepts continued to develop in the contemporary era in general education and then in English language teaching to young learners.

3.3 From child-centred to learner-centred – contemporary meanings in general education

Up to now we have been talking about child-centred education by tracing back its origins and its modern developments. However, what has happened in the last 20 years is that more people are talking about LC instead of child-centredness. This is because the term learner-centredness covers a wider range of learners. An important point to note is that in the last twenty years, research in psychology has provided valuable support for educational theories and practices and child-centred meanings have also been much researched and expanded. As historical theories of education were all products of their times, some of the historical meanings of child-centredness are found to be limited by the knowledge and values which prevailed when they were written. Therefore, this reduces the applicability to present-day situations and new terminology and new interpretations are needed (Moor, 1974:84). In the following, we focus particularly on the change of terms from child-centred to learner-centred and present the 14 learner-centred psychological principles proposed by American Psychological Association in 1997 as guiding principles for the current educational reform in America. We will also discuss about the relationship between learners and learning in conceptualizing contemporary education.

3.3.1 From child-centred to learner-centred

The world today is completely different from the days when child-centredness was first espoused in the 18th century and neither is it the same compared to the times when progressive education prevailed and developed during the first half of and mid 20th century in America and England. We have now entered into an era typified by information technology. The changes in the world of work and in the world economy

necessitate that we make major adjustments and refinements to our educational thoughts and practices (Report of the School-to-Work Task Force, 1999), thus, child-centredness is bound to develop new meanings. We need to return to the original thoughts of classic thinkers but reinterpret them in the contemporary context (Jin and Dan, 2004). So far as 'child-centredness' is concerned, it has been recognised that education needs to go beyond a concern with only children but a concern for a wider range of learners. Thus, the term 'learner-centredness' began to be used with more frequency in general education and is considered a more appropriate term to be applied to everyone in this learning society by Lambert and McCombs (1997). The contemporary meanings of LC draw from a wide range of disciplines and research bases, incorporating the historical meanings while accommodating to the changed social, cultural and educational needs of the present day, leading to a holistic understanding and interpretation of LC.

3.3.2 Learner-centred psychological principles

By drawing on extensive research from a wide range of disciplines, particularly psychology, American Psychological Association (APA, 1997) proposed 14 learner-centred principles, which can be said to represent the most up-to-date interpretations of the contemporary meanings of LC. The 14 principles should apply to learners of all ages and are presented in four inter-related domains: (1) cognitive and metacognitive; (2) motivational and affective; (3) developmental and social; and (4) individual differences. These principles harmonise the learner and learning by combining individual interests and needs with social and academic needs. They also stress repeatedly the role of the teacher and effective instruction to enable learning while at the same time to satisfy learner needs. The following gives a brief summary of the 14 principles and their implications for educational practices.

The principles within the first domain, cognitive and metacognitive, are based on an understanding of good learners and the nature of learning. It is believed that the learning process is characterised by intentional efforts and the construction of knowledge on the part of the learner through linking new knowledge with already

existing information .The role of the learner-centred teacher is to assist learners in developing, applying, and assessing their strategic learning skills and base their teaching on learners' prior knowledge, cognitive abilities, and their learning and thinking strategies. Learners need to be gradually empowered to become self-reflective and self-regulative so that they are able to use a variety of strategies in thinking, reasoning and reorganizing information. They should also be enabled to expand the strategies by reflecting on the method used, constantly evaluating and improving their effectiveness. It should be recognised that the strategies used may vary with different subject areas and among students with varying talents, interests, and abilities. To achieve this, a positive classroom environment is vital.

The second domain focuses on motivational and emotional influences on learning. This is based on the beliefs that affective factors such as intrinsic motivation, personal goals, along with the motivational characteristics of learning tasks, play a significant role in the learning process, which influence 'both the quality of thinking and information processing as well as individuals' motivation to learn' (Alexander and Murphy, 1997: 33). That is to say, positive emotions generally enhance motivation and facilitate learning and performance while intense negative emotions generally damage motivation. However, it is believed that mild anxiety can enhance learning and performance. Therefore, it is important to nurture learners' intrinsic motivation, which can be stimulated by creative tasks at the appropriate level of difficulty, relevant to personal interests, and allowing personal choice and control.

The third domain centres on developmental and social factors which recognise individual developmental variability across intellectual, social, emotional, and physical domains, as well as achievement in different subject areas. Teachers need to develop an awareness and understanding of developmental differences among children so as to create an optimal learning context. At the same time, the influence of social factors on learning is stressed as social interactions, interpersonal relations, and communication with others all affect learning. Therefore, interactive opportunities need to be created in the classroom and the teachers should respect for diversity and

encourage flexible thinking and collaborative learning. Only when a positive learning climate is established can learners feel safe to share ideas and participate in activities.

The last domain stresses individual differences. On the one hand, there is a need to recognise learner differences in terms of their preferences and preferred ways of learning; on the other hand, there is a need to note that individual learners' preferences sometimes may not always be helpful for them to reach their learning goals. Therefore, teachers should try to help learners examine their own learning preferences and expand or modify them for better learning results. Teachers also need to vary their instructional methods and material to meet the needs of different learners. It is important that learners' backgrounds, cultures, and experiences are valued, respected, and accommodated in learning tasks and contexts. As regarding assessment, it is stressed that appropriately high and challenging standards and assessment on the learner as well as his/her learning progress are important and integral parts of the learning process. A variety of assessment strategies, such as performance assessment and self-and-peer assessment, should be used to help the learner's understanding of the curricular material and provide valuable feedback to both learners and teachers about the progress toward the learning goals and also help provide information of various types for programmatic decisions.

According to APA (1997), the 14 principles are intended to deal with learners in a holistic way in real-world learning situations. As Alexander and Murphy (1997) point out, although as researchers 'we can theoretically and empirically extract cognition from affect, knowledge from strategic processing, or socio-cultural background from development, these dimensions remain inextricably intertwined in the real world' (p.42). Thus, all the 14 principles should be viewed as an organic set of principles; not in isolation from each other.

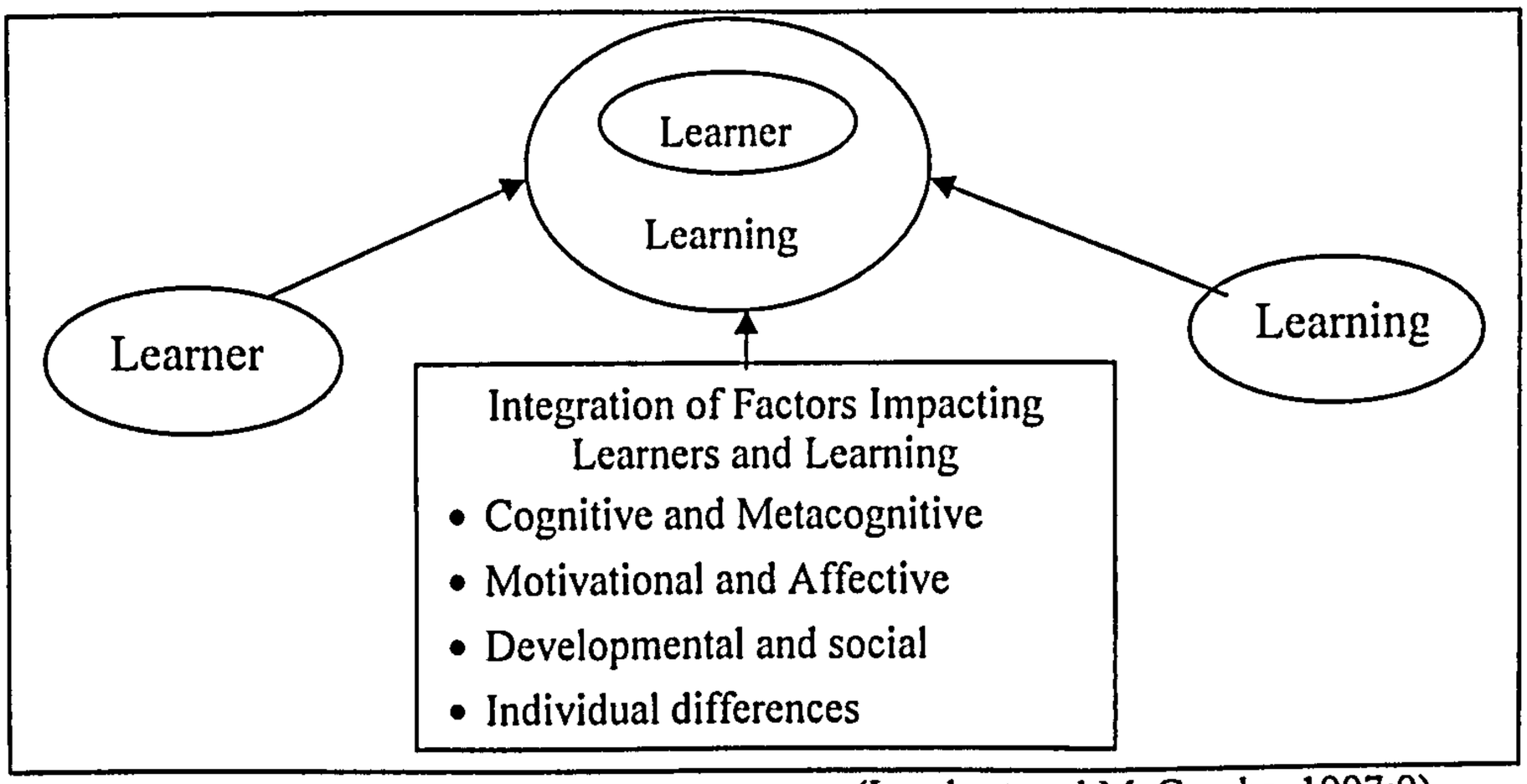
3.3.3 Learner-centred or learning-centred?

Goldenberg (1991, in Lambert & McCombs, 1997:11) contrasts learner-centred with learning-centred instruction in terms of how students learn and the conditions under which learning is optimised. In the learner-centred view, the focuses is on the

learner with an emphasis that learning is a natural process of knowledge construction guided by individual learners' goals, arising from the activity itself and interactions with others as a result of participating in the activity. In the learning-centred view, the emphasis is on the role of good teaching which enhances learning. This includes teaching procedures such as stating goals, summarizing prior learning, clear presentation of information, checking for understanding, modeling successful performance, guiding student practice toward fostering independent learners, and providing feedback on student performance. Goldenberg (1991) argues that as both views can find support from research, for example, constructivist theory and educational theory on motivation support the learner-centred approach, while cognitive theories of learning and teaching support the learning-centred approach, the two views should be reconciled.

Lambert and McCombs (1997:9) are also for integrating the learner and learning in learner-centred education. By examining the 14 psychological principles for learner-centred education, they explain their views on LC with an emphasis on both learners and learning. They believe that for educational systems to serve the needs of every learner, it is essential that every instructional decision focus on the individual learner - with an understanding of the learning process on the basis of four inter-related domains (see Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3 Learner-Centered Model: A Holistic Perspective



(Lambert and McCombs, 1997:9)

McCombs and Whisler (1997, in Lambert and McCombs, 1997:9), by taking into account of both the learner and the learning process, explain their perspective in the following:

> the perspective that couples a focus on individual learners (their heredity, experiences, perspectives, backgrounds, talents, interests, capacities, and needs) with a focus on learning (the best available knowledge about learning and how it occurs and about teaching practices that are most effective in promoting the highest levels of motivation, learning, and achievement of all learners). This dual focus, then, informs and drives educational decision making.

In other words, while putting learners as the reference point, learning needs to be taken care of so as to promote the highest levels of motivation and highest standards of achievement of all learners.

According to Lambert and McCombs (ibid), 'Focusing on the learner should not be interpreted as meaning there is no concern with learning achievement. Rather, the learner-centered model – by focusing on the individual learner and research on how best to support that learner's learning – provides a foundation for every learner to perform better on whatever outcomes or achievement measures might be chosen at the classroom, school, or district level' (p.12). That is to say, a sound learner-centred educational system should aim for enhanced learning outcomes for every learner. Learning is the result of facilitated *interactions* between students and appropriate curricula during which the teacher plays a crucial role (Amman and Black, 2000) to enable learners to learn with not only higher achievement on educational standards but also enhanced motivation to learn.

3.4 Learner-centredness in language education – from ELT to EYL

Despite a long history of development with child-/learner-centred concepts in general education, LC entered English language teaching (ELT) only some twenty or thirty years ago following the advent of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) from Europe in the early 1970s with a focus on adult learners. At the same time, similar approaches such as the Silent Way, Community Language Learning, the Natural Approach, and Situational Language Teaching were developed in the U.S. or

U.K. with a shift of concern from what language is to what language is for and how language can be learned (Howatt, 1984, Richards and Rogers, 2001). It was with CLT that the learner became the centre of the language learning process, whose needs were given due attention (Holec, 1980; Howatt, 1984). With humanistic psychology and experiential learning as its important sources of influence, CLT emphasises that teaching should meet learner needs, satisfy their interests, value personal experiences and interactions between or among learners (Nunan, 1999). Thus, learner-centredness, task-based activities and interactive-cooperative learning all become the central principles of CLT (Khan, 1991b). During the decade of the nineties, as noted by Raya *et al.* (2001), learner-centredness became the predominant methodological framework for foreign language teaching. However, for a long time, there had not been any specific teaching approaches or methods for EYL apart from superficially add-on games and songs, e.g. Nuffield 'French from Eight' used essentially an adult-style audio-visual approach (Khan, 1991a). The reasons are that first, CLT began with a focus on adults learners; second, EYL only developed since the 1980s as a mass phenomenon and it is only just beginning to be researched despite its enormous expansion in the 1990s (Cameron, 2001). During its rapid development, EYL has inevitably been influenced by learner-centred concepts from two sources: one is from the views of post-Plowden practitioners who contributed to EYL from general education based on an understanding of how children think and learn. The other is from influences based on teaching English to older learners, particularly from the theory and practice of CLT. Thus, EYL has been trying to develop its own approaches from a mixture of backgrounds.

Nevertheless, as we have seen earlier (Section 3.2.4) and shall see below, not all educators and ELT professionals agree about 'their' versions of learned-centredness. The following presents different views of LC in language teaching and how such views have influenced EYL. Then we shall move to look at the various recommendations on how children should learn a foreign language based on theories and practices from both general education and from ELT.

3.4.1 Learner-centredness in language education

Although the notion of LC has been widely used by many writers and curriculum developers to promote innovations in language teaching, not all of them agree on what the term means and relatively little research is carried out regarding LC in instructional contexts. Also, a number of ELT professionals and scholars are concerned that the term can be misleading for different people have interpreted it differently (e.g. Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; O'Neill, 1991; Holliday, 1994a, 1994b; Cameron, 2001). The reason perhaps, as Tudor (1996:1) argues, is that 'learner-centredness' is not 'a label attached to a single, clearly defined school of thought with unambiguous definitions and a clear programme of action'.

Nunan (1988), who is perhaps the first to discuss a learner-centred language curriculum, believes that in such a language programme, learning becomes a collaborative effort between the teacher and learners. In other words, 'information by and from learners will be built into every phase of the curriculum process' and 'learners will be involved in decisions on content selection, methodology and evaluation' (Nunan (1989:19). However, as pointed out by Tudor (1993) and Holliday (1994b), such learner-centred ideas and most of the practical applications defined by Nunan are confined to a more commercial or adult education context in Australia. Therefore, 'thought needs to be given to the way in which these principles can be applied in other teaching contexts' (Tudor, 1993:23).

Tudor (1992), by discussing learner-centred language education in general, provides the following definition for learner-centredness:

> Learner-centredness is not a 'method, nor can it be reduced to a given set of techniques or activities. Rather, it represents, in the first instance, an *awareness* of learner variability and of the contribution which learners can potentially make to the development of their learning programme, and then an *openness* to accommodate learner input as far as the human and pragmatic constraints of the target learning environment can comfortably allow (p.41. Original emphasis).

According to Tudor's definition, LC is not related to any specific set of techniques or activities. It simply involves recognition of students' potential to

contribute meaningfully to their own learning, but the degree and types of learner contribution may depend on the specific learning environment. In other words, neither the teacher nor the students are free to do whatever they wish to do. Every decision made will have to be acceptable with the human as well as practical constraints imbedded in that particular learning context.

As far as classroom teaching is concerned, Tudor (1996; 1992; 1993) believes that the main features of LC include at least four perspectives: (1) It should reflect the active involvement of the learners in their language study with learning activities made relevant to learners' needs. Also, learners are given the opportunity to make informed decisions about the learning contents and the structure of activities with some learning and assessment options open to them. (2) Pedagogically, guided discovery activities and building learning on learners' interests should be stressed. In other words, discovery-based exploratory learning should be one of the distinguishing features of a learner-centred methodology (Tudor, 1992:38). (3) Teaching should involve students as complex human beings, not simply as language learners and thus activities should be designed to reflect an understanding of students' affective needs. (4) In a learner-centred classroom, there should be space and time for developing self-directed learners or learner autonomy with the awareness of when and how students can contribute to their own learning. However, the means by which this is achieved can vary quite considerably from one context to another (Tudor, 1993). Moreover, Tudor (1992) stresses the importance of making a distinction between the substance and forms of learner-centred teaching as there are classrooms where students are involved in group or pair work in form but not involved substantially in terms of communicating ideas or developing understanding. A number of studies noted such a phenomenon when teachers were involving learners more in form but not in substance (e.g. O'Neill, 1991). So far very little systematic empirical research has been done to study how forms and substance of LC can be successfully achieved in classroom contexts and what reasons there are that hinder such a marriage.

Tudor (1992) states that the most crucial question is that once the basic decision has been made to adopt a learner-centred approach, the degree of learner-direction will have to be considered. This can be determined by at least two major sets of factors. The first relates to the learners' personal, psychological and experiential readiness to assume a responsible role in determining their learning programme. The second set of factors relates to the attitudinal and material constraints in the target learning environment. For each set of the factors, Tudor produces a three-point evaluation scale to help inform a decision-making in terms of how learner-centred it can be - a high rating indicates greater scope of learner involvement and a low rating indicates limited scope of learner involvement. However, Tudor points out that even if a high rating is resulted, it does not mean that learners can be given a wide-range of control over their learning from the onset. It has to be a gradual process with perhaps an explicit learner training component 'to support learners to transcend from one paradigm of learning to another paradigm of learning' so as to ensure that the demands made of the learners meet their ability both at an individual level and in the light of the constraints imposed by the wider learning environment. (p.33)

As we can see from the above, Nunan's views can be said to represent a strong version of LC with learners involved in making decisions at every stage in the learning process, while Tudor's views can be said to represent a weak version of LC taking into account of the contextual factors which influence and determine the degree of LC in a specific teaching context.

3.4.2 The roles of the teacher and learner in a learner-centred ELT classroom

Within the learner-centred approach, the issue of teacher's roles seems to be of central concern, which has caused a lot of confusion among language teachers. The development from the traditional approach to CLT and from TC to LC comes from the dissatisfaction with the traditional approach to language teaching based on structuralism and grammar translation method (Nunan, 1988). Typical teacher roles played in a traditional classroom include a direct knowledge provider or 'a source of

knowledge' and 'an activity organiser' who 'sets up and steers learning activities in the right direction, motivates and encourages students and provides authoritative feedback on students' performance' (Tudor, 1993:24). The traditional teacher controls the direction and pace of learning with the teacher cramming knowledge into the students' head. Drilling, repetitions, and memorisation are the main forms of learning. In a learner-centred or communicative classroom, teacher roles are seen to be changed from a knowledge provider to a facilitator, a resource organiser and a guide to activities. He/she is also a researcher and a learner himself/herself (Breen and Candlin, 1980; cf. Richards and Rogers, 2001:167). Other roles proposed also include a participant (Dam, 2000; Wang, 2006), an assessor, a carer, a manager, a counselor as well as a helper (Hedge, 2000) in the learning process.

Learners also need to assume different roles in a learner-centred language classroom. In a traditional classroom, they are often treated as passive receivers of knowledge and all they need to do is to memorise what is being taught. However, in a learner-centred learning context, learners need to contribute to their own learning. According to Tudor (1993), they need to be aware of themselves as language learners – their attitudes and motivation for learning; they need to be aware of their learning goals – their current ability and the goals to be achieved; they need to be aware of their learning options – various learning strategies and resources available; and they need to have language awareness – about how language is structured to express meaning with different functions and registers. Thus in a learner-centred classroom, the learner becomes an active participant in the learning process interacting within the group as well as with the teacher.

It is important to note that while LC expects both teachers and learners to assume new roles, what do they need to do with their traditional roles? Tudor (1993) believes that teachers will be continuously performing the roles they played in the traditional classroom as *knower* and activity organiser. They simply need to assume some new roles such as 'a learning counsellor' (p.24). With new roles added, the teacher will have to develop new strategies in teaching.

3.4.3 Learner-centred or learning-centred?

A number of ELT professionals also disagree on whether teaching should be learner-centred or learning-centred. For example, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) did not believe that a truly learner-centred approach really existed as it more or less rules out pre-determined syllabuses, materials etc. They, as well as Holiday (1994a), have expressed reservations for using the term learner-centredness. They prefer a learning-centred approach which takes into account not only learner factors but also contextual constraints in the target situation in determining the content, materials, methodology as well as the assessment of learning. Nunan and Lamb (1996) see learner training as an essential component of a learner-centred programme and through learning-centred methods and techniques, learners will be enabled to take charge of their own learning. Therefore, learning-centredness is a means to learner-centredness.

Cameron (2001), with a particular concern over teaching English to young learners, makes a distinction between learner-centredness and learning-centredness. While admitting that learner-centred teaching is an important step forward from subject-centred teaching, she believes that just being learner-centred is not enough as it can easily put one at risk of 'losing sight of what it is that we do in school, and of the enormous potential that lies beyond the child' (p.1). She believes that understanding the child and his/her interests as well as needs is certainly important; but as teachers, we should not stop at finding out what interests children and be led by children's interests. We need to guide them to explore and expand their interests with new experiences and more demanding tasks. With the learner-centred approach to teaching young learners, she found many classrooms where children enjoy activities that are fun but not intellectually meaningful or challenging. Fun, therefore, becomes a waste of limited class time usually available for language learning (Rixon, 1991; Cameron, 2001). To avoid such problems arising with the learner-centred approach, Cameron believes that a learning-centred perspective on teaching will draw teachers' attention to both the interests and needs of the learners as well as their learning effectiveness.

Dam (2000), based on her classroom experiences as a language teacher in promoting learner autonomy with school children, provides a practical model to illustrate a learning-centred process – a process which combines teacher-directed activities with learner-directed activities. In such a process, 'the teacher's knowledge about language learning – what to learn and how to learn – is combined with the learners' knowledge about themselves, their background, their likes and dislikes, their needs and their preferred learning styles' (p.20). She stresses that in a learning-centred approach to teaching, it is important that learners should be given the opportunity to be consciously involved in the learning process and in evaluating their own learning. In such a model, both the teacher and the learner are responsible for the outcome of learning. She proposes four premises for implementing a learning-centred model of teaching: first, the organisation of the classroom should be non-threatening for teacher-students and student-student interaction; second, the lesson should be clearly structured to indicate the teacher's responsibility and the learners' responsibility as well as the activities that students are expected to undertake; thirdly, the activities designed should relate to the learner's current attitude and motivation to learn, should activate their existing knowledge, should give scope for satisfying individual learner's needs, interests, and potential, should allow different learning outcomes and aim for possible products to be used by other learners, and should give scope of learner-learner interaction, cooperation and peer tutoring; fourthly, there should be opportunities for sharing and assessing learning by the learners themselves.

3.4.4 Children and foreign language learning

As most of the discussions about CLT and LC are based on adult learners, what is important for us to note is that there are often marked differences between an adult and a child in learning a second or foreign language in terms of their interest, motivation, needs, ways of learning, and cognitive levels. As little has been said about how children learn a language, particularly a foreign language in a learner-centred approach, this section is devoted to a brief review based on theories from

general education as well as ELT with a concern over children as language learners and how they should be taught.

Drawing from theories on how children think and learn in general education based on Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Dewey, Piaget, Donaldson, Vygotsky and Bruner as presented and discussed in Section 3.2.1, we have touched upon some theories related to the nature of children and their ways of learning with the conviction that children are different from adolescents and adults and they think and learn in different ways. Therefore, teaching should meet such needs of children. Similar principles should apply to foreign language teaching to young learners (Brewster, 1991). However, there are a few theoretical issues which are essential for understanding children as language learners and how they should be taught.

The first point to note is the difference for a child to learn a foreign language and his/her mother tongue. As Cameron (2001) stresses, the main difference lies in that before the child starts learning a foreign language, the first language is already 'a huge system' established in his mind (p.241). Therefore, at whatever age children begin to learn another language, they will use skills and strategies developed in using their first language to aid learning the new language (Tough, 1991). As far as strategies are concerned, studies from both first and second language have identified that imitations, repetitions as well as reinforcement are significant phenomena when children make their very first attempts in producing new words or utterances. Children, through imitation and repetition, gain practice until meaning is attached. Then they begin to use them for communication and also for creating new meaning (ibid). Also, children imitate and repeat short phrases which are termed as formulaic language and this is thought to be central to the development of language in the early stages for children (Fillmore, 1979, cf. Tough, 1991).

Another difference with children learning a language, as noted by Cameron (2001), is between learning a second and a foreign language, which is characterised by the different *amount and type of exposure* to the language (p.11, original emphasis). For foreign language learning, there is very little exposure and need

outside the classroom while the situation is the opposite for second language children. Rixon (2000:3) illustrates the differences by comparing the two types of contexts in terms of (1) the quantity of exposure to the target language; (2) the amount of communicative need for the target language to be mastered; (3) the variety of types of language models available; and (4) the opportunities and pressures to interact with other people. Such a difference is often discussed in notions of 'acquisition' and 'learning' proposed by Krashen (1982). By acquisition, it means that the child develops his/her language through interacting with people around him/her to meet daily needs while, learning refers to the context where language is taught through formal instruction with no social functions to play outside the classroom (Rixon, 1992). In the latter case, the child may not only encounter a very small amount of foreign language input with very different phonological system and writing script but also very different underlying cultural values and assumptions (Cameron, 2001). It is, therefore, a huge challenge for both the teacher and the child to try to teach or learn a foreign language.

Besides the differences in learning contexts, we should also recognise that the methods and techniques used for teaching children will need to be different from those we use to teach adolescents and adults. Cameron (2001) points out, first, that children are active agents in making sense of the world around them and in trying to construct a meaning from what is said to them in the context with full curiosity and interests in the way another language is sounded and used. Secondly, children are much slower than adolescents and adults in learning formal grammar. For them meaning is more important. Their skills in a new language grow with experiences along with the use of the skills. Thirdly, children become engaged in learning when they see a purpose or intention; also when they are relaxed and feeling secure. Therefore, teaching needs to combine the security of the familiar with the excitement of the new, building success into learning from the beginning. Fourthly, children like to try new things and are not afraid of making mistakes. They like tasks and activities that are neither over demanding nor undemanding. Above all, children need to be

involved affectively, intellectually, interactively as well as physically in learning. Thus, in learning a foreign language, children need to be actively involved in games or action-based activities. Teaching needs to start from concrete things instead of abstract explanations of grammar. Learning needs to make full use of all senses through hearing, speaking, touching, hands-on activities, and activities such as singing, chanting, miming, solving puzzle problems, playing games, guessing, and performing role plays. As language is a means of communication, teaching should focus more on meaning and on the use of it for meaningful interactions. However, children may not have a clear purpose or intention in learning a foreign language in school as many adults do. Therefore, they need to be motivated by interesting and relevant tasks which provide them with a clear purpose (Wang, Rixon, and Pinter, 2003).

For the above reasons, Vale and Feunteun (1995) point out that many of the techniques and attitudes associated with methodology for older pupils or young adults may not be relevant to younger learners. Just as has been stressed by Froebel about the role of play in children's learning, games/play have been recognised as important ways in helping children learn a foreign language (Bruner, 1977; Rixon, 1991; Khan, 1991b). Bruner (1977:272) points out that 'What is particularly interesting about play is its role in language acquisition and its provision of the opportunity for mastering rules and conventions'. Besides, because play and games contain elements of fun and can absorb interest of children, they can not only motivate and involve children but also create a relaxing condition with low affective filter for learners to achieve success in learning (Khan, 1991b). Games and play used in teaching children need to be purposeful, engaging, interactive, well-ordered, achievable, fun, developing competence in the language studied, as well as encouraging conceptual development of the child (Rixon, 1991; Khan, 1991b).

Another important point worth mentioning regarding children as language learners is the role of social interaction in the language learning process. The recognition of social interaction was first proposed by Vygotsky, who believed that

children live in a world full of other people and these people play important roles in helping children to learn (Vygotsky, 1962). Similar points are also made by Williams and Burden (1998:39) that 'children are born into a social world, and learning occurs through interaction with other people'. In other words, with the help of an adult, children can learn and do better than they would learn and do by themselves. Thus, Vygotsky's ZPD is of central importance as far as teaching is concerned. Teachers play important roles in identifying children's immediate potential of development and in bringing about learning in children through meaningful and purposeful interactions with children. Moreover, teaching content needs to meet children's age and their social-cultural experiences with activities congruent with their lives.

As we can see, primary language teaching makes considerable demands on a teacher's competence (Halliwell, 1992). Both Khan (1991b) and Rixon (2000) note that the teacher's own command of the foreign language is a crucial factor for effective teaching in EYL as it not only affects the quality of the language model provided but also the types of methodology adopted, because, without confidence and competence in the language to be taught, the teacher will not be able to engage children in genuine interaction and to organise meaningful tasks. Along similar lines, Brumfit (1991) also stresses that in a foreign language teaching context where children have little exposure to the language outside the classroom there is no justification to leave children with teachers who themselves lack confidence in their ability to teach and use the target language. Therefore, basic language competence is essential for teachers of young learners.

In recent years, the concept of 'learning to learn' has gained increasing importance for learners of all ages in this fast developing world of the information age simply because nobody is able to learn all the knowledge and skills during their school years (Pinter, 2006). Therefore, the most important skill to be developed is teaching children how to learn so that they can be equipped with the strategies to continuously acquire new knowledge and skills throughout their life-time. Such a skill was noted long ago by Vygotsky (1962), who points out that the child needs to

acquire certain habits and skills in a given area before he learns to apply them consciously and deliberately. Therefore, in the child's development, imitation and instruction play a major role and 'the only good kind of instruction is that which marches ahead of development and leads it; it must be aimed not so much at the ripe as at the ripening functions' but must be oriented toward the future' (p.104). Specifically for when and how to introduce 'learning to learn' with children learning a second or foreign language, Ellis (1991) has given some practical suggestions for teachers of young learners in helping children to think about their own learning and to experiment with different learning strategies.

To conclude, a good understanding of children and foreign language learning are essential for achieving effective teaching of a foreign language to young learners.

3.5 Learner-centredness – a collection of meanings with implications for EYL

Based on the above literature review, we can see that there has been a development of meanings around the concept of LC in language teaching and many of its contemporary meanings are derived and developed from the writings of earlier writers in general education and child development. It is realised that we should not care for the learner at the expense of learning; nor care for individual needs at the expense of the social needs; nor care for experiential learning at the expense of authoritative knowledge; nor care for the freedom of choice at the expense of necessary discipline and training of mind; nor care for affective development at the expense of cognitive development. In other words, 'the focus of education needs to be on clear expectations and high standards for each student while also respecting each student's diversity and unique talents (Lambert and McCombs, 1997:2). However, the core themes of child-centredness have lasted over the years and have become the basis for effective language education to children. Their implications combined with the contemporary meanings of learner-centredness for EYL are summarised below:

- Language teaching should take into account children' natural interest and curiosity; try to meet their needs, both physical and mental. Teaching should not

be in the form of direct transmission of grammatical and vocabulary knowledge. Instead, it should focus primarily on meaning and build on children's existing knowledge and experience closely related to their lives.

- Children should be given plenty of opportunities to learn language through play, hands-on activities and songs and chants, which can all be built into the learning process as tools to facilitate language learning. At the same time, children need plenty of opportunities to hear meaningful verbal repetition in context, to meet and say the words and phrases again and again in new contexts with good models of language. They also need feedback on production to improve fluency and accuracy (Cameron, 2001:60).

- There are natural stages along which children develop both mentally and physically. Hence, teaching should be based on relevant language materials and tasks that are appropriate for children's age and level of development.

- Children learn better in a social and cooperative environment so language teaching should be interactive to engage children as individuals and also in group learning.

- Individual children vary in interests, personality, intelligence, learning styles and many other aspects. Thus, teaching should cater for individual differences.

- Children need to be given opportunities to learn to set reasonable goals, select appropriate language learning strategies and think about how they have learned or what worked and what did not work for them in language learning.

- Children as well as their views need to be appreciated, respected and valued. They need to have confidence in themselves and see themselves as capable to achieve the expected learning goals which can have a strong influence on motivation and the effort they put into language learning because their beliefs about themselves will influence the quality of thinking and information processing. In order to enhance learner motivation and the learning outcome, it is important to build success into language learning from the very beginning.

- Skilful teaching about language plays an important role in helping language development (Cameron, 2001, 2003). Language learning tasks should be at an appropriate difficulty level, relevant to personal interests. Teachers should create meaningful contexts in which new forms are met and familiar ones expanded (ibid). Teachers should also provide guided instruction and timely feedback by observing or interacting with children. Tasks that provide for personal choice and control also enhance learner involvement and performance in learning a new language.

- Teachers should set appropriately standards and expectations, using various assessment tools with an emphasis on both the process and product of learning. Self-assessments of learning progress can also improve pupils' self appraisal skills and enhance motivation and self-directed learning.

- The classroom environment should be supportive and nurturing as it can have significant impacts on pupils' learning. It should be recognised that mild anxiety can enhance learning and performance while negative feelings generally damage motivation, interfere with learning and often lead to low performance.

For an overview of the historical, the modern as well as the contemporary meanings of child-/learner-centred claims and their implications for general education, please refer to Appendix 3, 4 and 5 respectively.

3.6 Learner-centredness in developing countries and related studies

Developing countries, as well as more developed countries in the Eastern world, have long been known to follow a teacher-centred didactic approach to education, emphasizing knowledge to be imparted, remembered and then applied. The assessment system also focuses on examining the discrete knowledge and skills and all students have to pass through rigid tests in order to move on to the next level of education. However, from the 1980s and particularly 1990s, learner-centredness as a notion originated from the West has been legitimised by government policies to be promoted in educational reforms in many developing countries (Black *et al.*, 1993, in O'Sullivan, 2004; Brodie *et al.*, 2002). There have been quite a lot of concerns and arguments over the appropriateness of LC for developing countries where the social and cultural values, educational traditions, and available resources are so different from the West. Darling-Hammond (1997, cf. Brodie *et al.*, 2002) argues that child-centred education aiming for integrated curricula, active in-depth learning; appreciation for diversity, collaborative group learning, and individualised teaching, etc. require substantial school restructuring and management, more open space, rich resources and smaller classes. O'Donoghue (1994) does not think those of 'discovery learning', 'activity-based learning' and 'integrated curricula' are appropriate for the developing world as they presuppose small classes, rich resources, capable teachers which do not exist. Similarly, Guthrie (1990) also challenges the appropriateness of those learner-centred practices for the developing world and argues for the teacher-centred formalistic approach which is believed to be more suitable for contexts where resources are limited and teacher professional capability is low. Tabulawa (2003)

notes that the current curricular reforms in many African countries (e.g. Botswana, Namibia and South Africa) which try to make LC their official pedagogy in schools are a result of the ideological influence from the West, particularly from Britain over many years of colonialism. However, there are also studies from developing countries which show some degree of teaching effectiveness after adopting a more learner-centred approach (e.g. Brodie *et al.*, 2002).

The problem is that learning does not occur in a vacuum. Contexts at all levels, from the immediate classroom to the school culture, from the community where the school locates to as large as the country, influence directly or indirectly what and how teachers teach, hence, what and how children learn in the classroom. The culture of teaching and learning is shaped by the accumulation of historical, cultural, economic and political factors that often cannot be duplicated in any other country in the world (Frisby, 1997:61). In this sense any teaching approach will have to be adapted to meet the unique context where teaching takes place and effective methods and techniques can only grow from within that context to accommodate to both the 'small' and 'large' cultures (Holliday, 1999) or 'micro' and 'macro' cultures (Alexander, 2000: 436) rather than being simply transplanted.

So far, very little research has been conducted to reveal how much of the ideology is actually implemented in the classrooms. And of the limited research carried out, it has been shown that while, in general, teachers were enthusiastic about the new curriculum and intended to implement learner-centred practices in their classrooms, learner-centred ideas were not very much implemented. For example, O'Sullivan (2004) studied 145 unqualified primary teachers within a three-year in-service training programme to examine to what extent a learner-centred curriculum as introduced by the Namibian government was implemented in the specific Namibian context. The study found that those learner-centred ideas such as caring for individual children and use of discovery learning were either beyond the teachers' capacity or constrained by their teaching conditions with limited time and resources. O'Sullivan

concludes that LC as a notion derived from the West has to be adapted to meet the cultural and educational context as well as the teachers' professional capability.

In another study in South Africa, Brodie *et al.* (2002) examined the ways in which teachers in South Africa had taken up learner-centred practices with regards to both form and substance during and after an in-service teacher training programme as such an ideology was also explicitly promoted by the government in the new national curriculum. It was pointed out that resources, tasks, questions, and group work were the forms which might or might not enable the substance of learner-centred teaching. The extent to which teachers elicited and engaged with learners' ideas and interests in order to develop new ideas and meanings was the substance of learner-centred teaching. Data was collected over 3 years (1996-1998) using both classroom observations and teacher interviews. The findings showed that only four teachers out of eighteen took up both the forms and substance of LC, eleven took up only the forms without the substance, and three took neither the form nor the substance. Nevertheless, most teachers did attempt to develop alternatives to teacher-centred practices, they tended to move between teacher- and learner-centred practices and developed hybrid teaching styles. The study revealed that how to engage with learners' ideas in teaching was not only difficult to define but also difficult to implement as it obviously required more awareness, experience and effective strategies on the part of the teacher.

A study by Croft (2002) in Malawi examined 15 lessons taught by 5 experienced lower primary teachers in three under-resourced schools in Southern rural Malawi. The study aimed to find out what were considered to be good practices and what good teachers were capable of doing in those impoverished contexts. What was found significant about the lessons was that 11 out of 15 employed songs which seemed to have an important role in making the lessons learner-centred. A number of functions of songs were identified for the primary classrooms studied. Apart from enjoyment, songs also encouraged comprehension and production of language and contributed to classroom management. At a deeper level, songs invoked a sense of community and

while singing, all children had to subject their individual desires to the communal good. In a teaching context with extremely large classes – over 100 and 200 children without a proper classroom, there was little room for individualism, little room for social contact with the teacher or for physical movement. Songs were found to have helped build positive relationship between the teacher and the children, giving children a sense of belonging and a sense of security in addition to the content of learning. Although the techniques may not be usefully generalisable for other developing countries where the traditions and context vary, an important implication drawn from the study is that effective teaching techniques are those that can take advantage of the cultural traditions and are used to best maximise learning in the specific context.

To summarise, the studies reviewed in this section show that implementing learner-centred ideologies in developing countries is far more complicated than what the government or proponents expect or think. To a large degree, a gap exists between the espoused ideology and the classroom practices of the teachers. The authors have all stressed the importance of taking into account of the local context, such as teacher factors, resources, as well as cultural traditions when trying to implement learner-centred education. The studies suggest that LC will need to be modified to take on local features which best encourage learning within that context. In other words, teachers in different contexts may produce a combined version of LC with both Western features and local features where the context permits.

3.7 Chinese philosophical thoughts and relevant research in China

In this section, some major Chinese philosophical thoughts and their implications for education are discussed followed by an overview of the research done so far regarding LC both in theory and in practice in China. The reason is twofold: the first is to identify gaps between as well as links to the Western philosophical thoughts and their implications; the second is to provide an ideological and cultural background for the current research.

3.7.1 Chinese philosophical thoughts and implications for education

According to Chen (2000:8), historically, there are two main schools of thought in ancient Chinese culture, which divides between the focus on society as a whole and the focus on individuals. The school of Pre-Qin Confucianism (Ru), Mohism (Mo), and Buddhism (Fa) values more of society, and has been the main influence and the core of Chinese cultural tradition. On the other hand, Daoism, especially the school of Zhuangzi put more value on the individual, and his school of thought has played an important role to rectify the other. Of these two schools of thought, the former starts with the ideal society based on which standards of ideal individual are set. In other words, individuals must be educated to serve the needs of the society. The latter starts from the ideal individual, therefore, society should be developed to meet the needs of individuals. Although both schools stress the consistency and harmony between society and individuals, their points of departure are different and the former has had a much stronger influence on the Chinese society and education.

For thousands of years, society, represented by authorities, has exercised an overwhelming power over the individual. To Confucius, society is structured hierarchically with the most powerful on the top and each individual has a position in the hierarchy in relation with others. Everyone within the social structure should play his/her own part and show respect to the one who is higher in the hierarchy. Thus, children should respect parents and grandparents; wives should be submissive to husbands; students should be obedient to teachers; and civilians to authorities. In this sense, 'the person always exists within settings – in particular situations where there are particular people with whom one has relationships of a particular kind' (Nisbett, 2003:50). Therefore, one's action cannot be simply described as one's wishes, 'since all actions are in concert with others, or at the very least affect others, harmony in relationships becomes a chief goal of social life' (ibid: 51) and this is typical of a collective culture. Thus, in a culture marked by collectivism, there is interdependence among group members and individuals share mutual obligations among themselves.

> 'The goal for the self in relation to society is not so much to establish superiority or uniqueness, but to achieve harmony within a network of supportive social relationships and to play one's part in achieving collective ends. These goals require a certain amount of self-criticism – the opposite of tooting one's own horn' (Nisbett, 2003: 55).

In line with collectivistic values, academic success of the child is 'an important source of pride for the entire family (Stigler and Smith, 1985:1260; cf. Salili, 1996:89) and also for the entire group, the class, the school, as well as the country to which the child belongs. Also, within the collectivistic culture, one of the essential values of education in Confucian ideas is the advocacy of peace and harmony. 'Education is regarded as guidance in the pursuit and realisation of universal harmony and peace, including human harmony with nature, society, others and oneself and the harmony between different nations and cultures' (Jin and Dan, 2004:576).

For Confucianism, education can make a difference to human beings: 'By nature men are nearly alike, but through experience they grow wide apart' (From *Three Character Classic*). The Confucian heritage emphasises the virtue of effort and 'filial piety', which includes personal effort, perseverance and respect for teachers who possess authoritative knowledge. It also stresses human perfectibility and educability. In other words, success in education can lead to self-actualisation and one can have the wisdom to become a sage in order to serve the public, which will in turn lead to personal fame and family wealth (On, 1996). Moreover, whether one is intelligent or not is not crucially important, what is important is how much effort one is willing to put into learning and one's willpower to overcome difficulties in order to achieve the goals of learning. Thus, strict discipline, hard work, personal effort, perseverance, proper behaviour rather than expressions of opinion, critical thinking, or creativity are valued. The Confucian approach to education also makes memorisation a significant part of learning. However, memorisation is, in fact, not the only kind of learning emphasised. According to Confucian tradition, memorisation, understanding, reflection and questioning are four inter-related basic components of learning (ibid). Furthermore, the kind of memorisation and function of repetition are not the same as what was often understood as mechanical or without understanding. For example,

Marton, Dall'Alba, and Kun's (1996:82) study found that the traditional Asian practice of repetition or memorisation can have different purposes. On the one hand, repetition can be associated with mechanical rote learning; on the other hand, repetitions can enhance memorisation which can then be used to deepen and develop understanding.

Although there is no formal Confucian teaching in modern schools, Chinese education which has grown out of the Confucian tradition believes in hard work, self-determination, and respect for knowledge, for authority and for the elders. All these are still present in the form of teacher-centredness in classrooms (Agelasto, 1996). These traditional beliefs also prevail strongly in child-rearing practices (Au and Entwistle, 1999). It is common practice that children from a very young age are expected and trained to memorise and recite lines of poems. It is believed that such memorisation practice, though not necessarily with understanding, can contribute to learning and understanding later and it is considered a good exercise for the brain because things that are committed to memory when young can last for a life time and a good knowledge base can always be helpful in deepening and widening understanding. As pointed out by Biggs (1996), 'what goes on prior to formal schooling is as important in determining learning as what goes on inside classrooms' (p.59). As child-rearing practices in China require children from a very young age to be willing to work hard, to do a lot of memorisation, and to be respectful to teachers and elders, as well as following rules in group learning, pupils, starting from primary school, are inclined to learn together in class, to do repetitions with Chinese characters and multiplication tables in mathematics. Because educational achievement is highly valued within Chinese society and product more than process is emphasised, memorisation and hard work are widely practised by students of all ages preparing for different levels of exams.

The Chinese orientation towards life has also been shaped by Daoist thinking which has influenced strongly people's view of the world and their ways in tackling contradictions. Nisbett (2003:13) points out that Daoist thought 'expresses a

fundamental of the Eastern stance towards life'. Thus, the two poles of LC and TC can be viewed through a Daoist lens by using the famous yin-yang symbol. In such a symbol, yin alternates with yang and they only exist because of each other and there is truth on both sides. However, it is not to say that they are always taking equal shares. Sometimes one position has all or most of the truth on its side and the other has little or none (Nisbett, 2003). The general principle of yin–yang balance as an essential dynamic feature of harmony can be applied in a wide variety of contexts.

Kim, (2001) by applying some key aspects of the yin-yang dynamics, describes four major aspects of the yin-yang concepts: (1) duality and plurality, (2) both-and in contradiction and paradox, (3) reciprocity and change, and (4) harmony and balance. He provides the following explanation to illustrate his points on the nature and relationship between yin and yang:

> The one prominent feature of yin-yang dynamics is the idea of duality and plurality, in that one source has two aspects and those bipolar entities together construct a multi-dimensional whole. Within this complex structure, the opposite components exist together in a 'both-and' mutuality rather than 'either-or' reduction. Instead of repelling against or reducing to one, the two contradictory ideas are often placed together in a dynamic correlation. This dynamic correlation is not static but fluid, constantly changing and flowing within the mutual reciprocity. Two opposite entities not only stand side-by-side but also coerce, challenge, and correct each other in a constant mutual interaction. This mutual interaction does not occur as a random accident but rather for the dynamic retrieval, retaining, and return to the centrality of balance (Kim, 2001:287).

Discussing the relations between yin-and-yang does not mean that we should let things develop as they would naturally do. What we should do is to become aware of the nature of the opposite components within a complex structure and try to cope with different forces by making one's own decisions in order to achieve ultimately the balance which best harmonise the two seemingly opposing sides. In a similar manner, the balance between TC and LC should not be left to occur at random. Decisions will have to be made by teachers who teach in classrooms. The teacher needs to constantly make decisions on which approach to take and for what purposes in order to achieve

the goals and objectives set for teaching the subject as well as for educating the child within the context which constrains or allows certain possibilities.

3.7.2 Learner-centredness and related research in China

In China, there have been a lot of efforts made in the last two decades searching for answers of a better education for school children. Scholarly discussions on what good education is and what assumptions are behind have increased and become widely influential with the advent of the new curriculum reform since 2001. The new curriculum explicitly advocates the LAMP approach to education (see Section 2.3) which results from a direct influence of the Western ideology along with China's open-door policy to the world in the early 1980s. There was a clear need to rethink Chinese education with the rapid social and technological development and market economy. In fact, the influence of the Western educational ideology can be traced back to the early 20th century when Dewey himself visited China (Darling, 1994, Jin and Dan, 2004). As he stayed in China for a whole year, his influence to Chinese education cannot be denied. His Chinese students, such as Hu Shi and Tao Xingzhi – two well-known influential educators on Chinese educational history, introduced his ideas into China (Jin and Dan, 2004). Many of their writings with particularly those of Tao Xingzhi still have an impact on education today. A new generation of young scholars who went abroad since the 'open door policy' has also brought back many western ideas. Many more books introducing Western philosophy and educational theories are available in bookstores now than 20 years ago and Dewey, Piaget, Bruner, and Vygotsky are among all the other well-known figures.

The search for new ideas in education began in the mid 1980s under the national research project headed by the Education Department of Beijing Normal University named 'Xuesheng Zhuti Jiaoyu' (学生主体教育) which literally means promoting education with 'Learners-as-main-participants' (LAMP) (see Section 2.3) with an underlying meaning of 'teacher-directed learner-centred' orientation. The research has continued for 20 years with its seventh national conference held in Beijing in 2005. According to Pei (Institute of Educational Science, 2005), the process of the

research has undergone three major stages. The first stage began at a macro level with a focus on exploring concepts and formulating theories followed by the second stage at a medium level with a focus on school reform and restructuring. A number of schools participated in the research and became experimental sites for the research project. The third stage began a few years ago along with the new curriculum reform which moved to the micro level with a concern for what happens in the classroom, investigating teaching and learning processes and particularly trying to identify indicators from effective teaching where students perform the role of main participants. The research project and the new curriculum reform have received a lot of enthusiasm from both researchers and teachers. Educationalists from universities collaborate more closely with schools and public lessons have become a practical and popular channel for researchers and teachers to communicate face to face and discuss and explore in depth how teaching can make students main participants in learning. Debates are still going on in terms of whether it should be the students who act as main participants or whether the teacher and students should act as equally important participants in the educational process. The research project has enabled those schools and teachers who participated in the research project to become leading schools and leading teachers for implementing the new curriculum.

A collection of papers (Institute of Educational Science, 2005) published at the seventh national conference has included more than 40 papers given by classroom teachers with research topics ranging from how to guide children in discovery learning to using group work to change children's way of learning. Also, there are papers discussing the main features of effective teaching in different subject areas. However, the influence of the research has been limited to academics and researchers in general education, not fully participated in by researchers in specific subject areas nor by teachers in a majority of other schools, at least not until the most recent curriculum reform. Little systematic research is found regarding English language teaching, let alone primary English.

3.8 Issues arising from the literature review with a concern on implementing LAMP/LC in primary EFL context in China

Based on the literature reviewed so far regarding both the theories and practices of Western notions of LC in general education and in ELT as well as relevant research in some developing countries and China, this section raises some issues arising from the literature review which concern implementing LC in the primary EFL context in China.

3.8.1 LC or TC – Does it have to be a dichotomy?

The development of the child/learner-centred philosophy reviewed so far has raised a number of theoretical as well as practical issues. The root of all the issues seems to lie in the false dichotomy of the two opposing approaches to education – child/learner-centredness versus traditional/teacher-centredness, which has been the centre of argument for centuries and has led to many practical issues as well. An alternative is to find a point midway between the two extremes, replacing the disjunctive 'or' with a conjunctive 'and' for 'a satisfactory synthesis' (Entwistle, 1970:211). Edwards and Mercer (1987) also point out that the traditional ideology is all about teaching, and the child-centred ideology is all about learning. 'What is needed is a new synthesis, in which education is seen as the development of understanding' (p.36), in a shared social, cultural, and school context. Dewey, as early as 1911 (1956a) reminded us of the error made by many for dichotomizing the two approaches to education: 'There are those who see no alternative between forcing the child from without, or leaving him entirely alone. Seeing no alternative, some choose one mode, some another' (p.17). ELT professionals also recognised the division as inappropriate. According to Tudor (1996), a learner-centred approach does not involve an either/or decision. Nunan (1996) believes that it is a relative matter, not an all-or-nothing concept. A Chinese teacher/scholar has called the attention of many by his recently published book entitled 'Student Second' (Li, 2006). He argues that regarding one type of people and their work as purely serving the development of another type of people is rather unrealistic. Stressing 'student first' can be quite one-

sided and pessimistic for teachers in the educational reform with the assumption that teachers only work for the happiness and future prosperity of the students. He believes that this has gone too far from the original intention of our reform. The fact is that without teachers' development first, there will not be student quality development. He argues that we need to think carefully where teachers' positions are while putting learners in the centre of learning. The issue facing Chinese primary EFL teachers in the current research is to find out how they perceive the LAMP/LC approach to education, what approaches they would like to take in teaching English to children and what contextual factors influence their decisions when trying to implement LAMP/LC in their classrooms. It is worth investigating whether they are able to find a synthesis between TC and LC. Clearly, all these decisions will have to be made by the teachers in the light of all possible constraining factors in their teaching context.

3.8.2 Is there a way to bridge the gap between theory and practice?

As discussed earlier, learner-centred theories are often viewed by many teachers as good in theory but unworkable in practice. The fact is, as noted by Entwistle (1970), no matter how hard theorists argue about the different approaches, teachers simply leave the theorists with their argument and carry on with the daily tasks of teaching in their own ways where they see fit. The reason for this is that there is, in fact, no one-to-one correspondence to be found between theory and practice. Theories only provide generalisations, but people often ask 'theories to perform tasks which, by their nature, they are unfitted to perform' (ibid::186). As a result, many teachers, in practice, were found struggling with dilemmas when they tried to apply LC in their classrooms. On the one hand, they embraced the ideology and tried to be learner-centred, hoping to give children more freedom and choice in learning; on the other hand, they felt that they were constrained by the curriculum objectives to be covered within a specified time (Berlak *et al.*, 1975, in Open University, 1984b; Edwards and Mercer, 1987). Also, teachers were found stretching themselves to both ends because they simply 'have to teach both the children and the subject' (Alexander, 1984:15).

The problem is, as I see it, that we fail to see the fact that as LC principles need to be operationalised by teachers within their particular teaching contexts, there may not be one form of practice to be found but perhaps a range of divergent practices that may all conform to the principles of LC due to different 'small cultures' (Holliday, 1999: 237) where teachers teach. In the context of primary EFL in China, the issues are whether teachers are found sharing similar principles in teaching, how they bridge the gap between principles and practices, and what forms of practices can be found that reflect the particular social, cultural, and institutional contexts.

3.8.3 What challenges do primary EFL teachers face in China?

A number of scholars have made the point that for promoting LC, teachers need to add a number of new responsibilities which are not normally found in a traditional classroom (e.g. Holliday, 1994b; Tudor, 1996). O'Sullivan (2004) also points out that 'there has been a huge underestimation of what is involved in learner-centred education' (p.594). It actually requires specific assumptions and great skills on the part of the teachers and also presupposes availability of an environment with space, resources and smaller classes. Compared to the transmission mode of teaching, rote learning, recitations and teacher explanations, the discovery way of learning with teacher's scaffolding through dialogues is undeniably more demanding of teacher skills and 'judging what is and what is not scaffolding is more difficult' (Alexander, 2000:526). As foreign language teachers, they also face the pressure of a good command of the language they teach (Brumfit, 1991; Khan, 1991b; Rixon, 2000). Therefore, Chinese primary EFL teachers need to prepare themselves with not only good language skills and new teaching techniques but also new attitudes, expectations, and commitments. They need to develop their professional judgement for the degree and level of learner involvement within the particular context they work in, such as the size of class, the availability of resources, the teacher's own ability, and the general cultural attitudes. All of the above may either constrain or encourage teachers' take-up of the learner-centred ideas. Therefore, a full investigation is needed to find out how Chinese teachers view their own roles in a LAMP/LC classroom,

what challenges they perceive for implementing LAMP/LC in their classrooms, and what factors influence their decisions on the degree of LAMP/LC and level of control on the part of the teacher.

3.9 Summary

This chapter started with a historical review on the Western notions of child-centredness in general education based on the works of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Froebel. Then it moved to look at its development in modern times based mainly on the writings of Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky, Bruner, and Donaldson before introducing the contemporary meanings of LC which drew extensively on research from a wide range of disciplines, particularly psychology. Following the development of child-centredness to learner-centredness in general education, the route of development of LC in the field of English language teaching was traced and then further examined in the field of teaching English to young learners with implications drawn for EYL from both historical child-centred ideas and the contemporary meanings of LC. Following the review on Western notions of LC, related research in developing countries as well as in China was also reviewed including a brief introduction to Chinese philosophical thoughts and their influence on Chinese education. The chapter ended with some issues highlighted to be further researched.

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the research methodology adopted for this study is presented. The refined research questions come first along with their respective sub-questions in relation to the overall aims of the study. Then, detailed research design with justifications for a mixed research approach, data collection instruments, research procedures as well as data analysis methods are described. Issues regarding ethics for the research and researcher roles are also discussed. The chapter concludes with a diagram summarising the methodological framework for the current research.

4.1 Research questions

This research seeks to explore how LAMP and LC is perceived and practised by Chinese primary EFL teachers and what factors influence their decision-making. The research attempts to answer the following three sets of questions:

RQ1: What are Chinese teachers' general attitudes towards and beliefs about LAMP/LC in the context of primary EFL in China?

RQ 1-1: What general beliefs do primary teachers hold towards EYL?

RQ 1-2: How do they perceive their own roles in classrooms?

RQ 1-3: What are their perceived goals for primary English?

RQ 1-4: What are their perceptions of 'good pupils'?

RQ 1-5: What is their understanding of 'learning'?

RQ 1-6: What are their reactions towards LAMP/LC?

RQ 1-7: What typical features are identified as reflecting LAMP/LC in classrooms?

RQ2: What are teachers' reported practices, approaches to teaching, and factors affecting their practices and choice of approaches?

RQ 2-1: What do teachers report about their practices in classrooms?

RQ 2-2: How do they assess their own approach to teaching, learner-centred or teacher-centred, and why?

RQ 2-3: What factors affect their practices and choice of approaches?

RQ3: What do the practices of generally accepted good teachers reveal about LAMP/LC in Chinese primary schools and the underlying factors that determine the kind of practices observed?

RQ3-1: What typical features of LAMP/LC can be observed in classes conducted by teachers accepted as good in the profession?

RQ3-2: What beliefs underlie the practices of the teachers observed?

To answer each set of the questions proposed above, different types of research instruments were employed which were described in the next section.

4.2 Research design

To get a clear picture of how Chinese primary teachers of English view and mediate LAMP/LC in teaching and the possible factors affecting their choice of the approach, the need to strike a balance between breadth and depth of data collection was recognised. Therefore, to answer the above questions, mixed research methods are employed which combined quantitative with qualitative approaches. Doing research with a mixed approach is also in line with the recent developments in research methods which have led to an increase in the use of multiple methods, including combinations of qualitative and quantitative data (Pattern, 1990:10). Gorard and Taylor (2004:4) argue that whether qualitative or quantitative, they are always more powerful when used in combination than in isolation.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods have their own values as each possesses its own strengths as well as weaknesses. Because of this, 'they constitute alternative, but not mutually exclusive, strategies for research' (Pattern, 1990:14). The advantage of quantitative approach is its possibility to measure the attitudes or reactions of a large number of people to a limited set of questions by employing standardised measures so that the varying perspectives and experiences of people can be fitted into a limited number of predetermined response categories to which numbers are assigned so as to facilitate comparison and statistical aggregation of the data (ibid). Qualitative methods, on the other hand, permit the researcher to study

selected issues in naturally occurring situations in depth and detail. Pattern (1990:14) further states:

> Approaching fieldwork without being constrained by predetermined categories of analysis contributes to the depth, openness, and detail of qualitative inquiry, therefore, they can produce a wealth of detailed information about a much smaller number of people and cases. This increases understanding of the cases and situations studied but reduces generalisability.

By combining different approaches in one single study, one method can be complemented by the strength of another research technique (Buckingham and Saunders, 2004), and in this way they can work together to reduce bias, add rigor, breadth, and depth to an investigation (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998), and 'increase the scope and power of research' (Punch,1998:243). Also, by using multiple methods, data collected by using one method can be validated by another. Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2001:61) point out that while objectivity remains an ideal, the use of qualitative techniques can help 'check' the validity of findings.

Based on the above discussion, a mixed mode of research methods was employed to answer the three main research questions and their relative sub-questions proposed in this study.

Main Research Questions and sub-questions		**Research Instruments**
RQ1	What are teachers' general attitudes towards and beliefs about LAMP/LC in the context of primary EFL in China? RQ1-1: What general beliefs do primary teachers hold towards primary English language teaching? RQ1-2: How do they perceive their own roles in the classroom? RQ1-3: What are their perceived goals for primary English? RQ1-4: What are their perceptions of 'good pupils'? RQ1-5: What is their understanding of 'learning'? RQ1-6: What are their reactions towards LAMP/LC? RQ1-7: What typical features are identified as reflecting LAMP/LC in classrooms?	■ Questionnaire survey (both closed and open questions for answering all the questions in RQ1) ■ Teacher interviews

RQ2	What are teachers' reported practices and approaches, as well as factors affecting their practices and approaches taken? RQ2-1: What do teachers report about their practices in classrooms? RQ2-2: How do they assess their own approach to teaching, Learner-centred or teacher-centred, and why? RQ2-3: What factors affect their practices and choice of approaches?	■ Questionnaire survey (both closed and open questions for answering all the questions in RQ2) ■ Teacher interviews
RQ3	What do the practices of generally accepted good teachers reveal about LAMP/LC in Chinese primary schools and the underlying factors that determine the kind of practices observed? RQ3-1: What typical features of LAMP/LC can be observed in classes conducted by teachers accepted as good in the profession? RQ3-2: What beliefs underlie the practices of the teachers observed?	■ Classroom observations ■ Teacher interviews ■ Cross reference to literature review and curriculum document

The quantitative method used in the current study comprises a large-scale questionnaire survey with an attempt to reveal patterns of thinking and provide a panoramic picture of the views and reported practices of the teachers under survey. As China is a vast country with a large number of English teachers, the study of the impact of the new curriculum on the teachers cannot be fulfilled by just employing a few case studies. Although the questionnaire survey may not necessarily be able to provide a complete picture of the scale of impact, it will at least provide some information representative of a large teacher population in the primary sector. The open questions in the questionnaire will also add some elements of qualitative concern. It is recognised, however, that when quantitative data is treated numerically, often 'the uniqueness of particular features is lost. What emerges is a description of relationships; almost disconnected from the particulars from which the data were originally secured – this transformation of qualities into their quantitative "equivalents" – they are never equivalent' (Eisner, 1991:38). After all, as pointed out by Allwright and Bailey (1991: xvii), it is 'whatever actually happens in the classroom that really matters', because this is when teaching can make a difference to

our learners. Alexander (2000) also points out that to gain access to ideas and meanings about teaching, an essential tool is observing how teachers teach and then talking with those whom we watch. Therefore, to complement the quantitative method, observations of teachers recommended for their good practices and interviews with these teachers were planned with the aim to explore further and deeper how teachers' beliefs are implemented in real classrooms and what the teachers' underlying assumptions and beliefs are behind their actions in classrooms. Alexander (1984) notes that teachers' actions in the classroom are the consequence of thoughts, therefore, both their actions and thoughts behind actions deserve our attention.

There are a number of reasons why teachers exhibiting good practices are chosen for the qualitative study. First, the implementation of the new primary curriculum began in 2001 nationwide incrementally. During the time when this research was undertaken between 2004 and 2005, many major cities and urban areas were entering their fourth year of implementation beginning from grade 1 while many less developed regions, particularly rural places, were just beginning to introduce English in their primary schools beginning from grade 3. It takes time for the new ideology to be recognised and experimented. Therefore, it is assumed that learner-centred features will be more prominent in teachers known for their good practices just as Alexander (2000) notes that workable practices or models are normally developed within the most capable teachers first before they are disseminated to all other teachers. Besides, the study of good practices will provide insights as well as pedagogical support for effective teacher training as it will demonstrate what is possible within the Chinese primary context and what teachers are capable of achieving with regard to LAMP/LC. Secondly, it is practically more feasible for the researcher to gain access to good teachers' classrooms as most of the in-service teacher training activities in China take place in the form of public lessons given by good teachers in their own schools but open for observation to other teachers followed by reflections and discussions among participating teachers. As a result,

good teachers are very much used to being observed. Schools also consider hosting such events as a good opportunity to raise their profiles. Thirdly, no complicated formality is needed to gain special permission from school-heads and individual teachers for making arrangements for observation although permissions and arrangements need to be made with local ELT advisers. In the case of my research, a trade-off became the best solution and was welcomed by the local educational authorities for my access to the subjects as I agreed to provide input for such in-service training events. It is worth noting that such teacher training events also represent public exemplifications of the new curriculum in practice as they also show to some degree official perceptions of what practice consistent with the NECS should look like, hence, how such practices are understood by the educational leaders in the district represented. This suggests that LAMP awareness has extended beyond only teachers in those districts.

Regarding both observations and interviews, it is pointed out by Bryman (2001:14) that in order to grasp the meaning of particular social behaviours, it is important to gain access to the points of view or interpretations from those directly involved in the actions. Arrangements were, therefore, made so that I was not only able to observe good practices but also to interview the teachers after the lessons wherever possible to gain access to teachers' understanding of LAMP/LC and their interpretations about their own teaching. Therefore, apart from a large-scale questionnaire study, the current study employs four kinds of qualitative data collection methods (1) direct observation of classroom teaching of 18 selected teachers of generally accepted good practice in order to identify the features of LAMP/LC in primary EFL classrooms; (2) self-reflections by most teachers observed after the lessons to examine further their views on language teaching and learning; (3) in-depth, open-ended interviews with individual teachers or focus groups to explore further the insights and underlying beliefs teachers hold towards LAMP/LC; and (4) curriculum documents.

4.3 Quantitative data collection

4.3.1 Questionnaire sampling

For a survey study, getting a large number of representative participants is a major concern. Ideally, random sampling is mostly desired. However, realistically, random sampling was almost an impossible task in this case as primary teachers work in different schools in different parts of the country and all of them have very different class schedules. Also, it would mean listing hundreds and thousands of primary EFL teachers in the country and picking every "nth" one, which is totally unfeasible. Therefore, convenience sampling (Berg, 2004; Babbie, 1998; Bryman and Cramer, 2001) was used for this study where there were in-service training sessions for either the new curriculum or the use of new textbooks. Bryman and Cramer (2001:101) assert that 'the difference between research based on random samples and convenience samples in terms of their relative representativeness is not always as great as sometimes implied'. Questionnaires were distributed between April 2004 to January 2005 in seven teacher-training events in Beijing and six other provinces of Hebei, Henan, Hubei, Fujian, Guangdong, and Sichuan with the researcher present in one occasion and the rest helped by her colleagues who conducted those teacher training workshops (for a full record of questionnaire data collection, see Appendix 6). Anonymity was guaranteed to all participants. Among a total number of 1500 questionnaires distributed, 1040 copies were collected with ultimately 1000 valid in spite of a small number which missed out some sub-questions here and there. However, overall they were considered valid.

4.3.2 Questionnaire design

The purpose of the questionnaire study was to explore to what extent Chinese teachers identify with the LAMP/LC approach to EYL and how they teach in classrooms, i.e. their attitudes and general beliefs towards language teaching; their perceptions of their own roles in the classroom; their perceived goals for primary English; their views on typical features of LAMP/LC classrooms and differences between LAMP and LC; their general approach to teaching; the perceived benefits

and potential difficulties for implementing LAMP/LC, and their own teaching behaviours.

The questionnaire consists of four sections (see Appendix 7 and 8 for the Chinese and English versions of the questionnaire). The first section is designed to collect background information on the participants under survey, such as gender, age, years of teaching experience, the teaching workload, the kind of textbooks they use, the degrees they hold, types of in-service training attended, and the location of their schools. The second section focuses on the respondents' general attitudes to and perceptions about English language teaching, including their beliefs about teaching English in the primary school; their perceptions of teachers' roles in the classroom, their views on good pupils and learning. The third section aims to find out what they think they actually do in the classroom. The participants are also asked in this section about their reactions towards LAMP/LC and to assess their own approaches in terms of how learner-centred they are and how favourable their teaching contexts are for the implementation of the new curriculum. Most questions in Section II and III are designed in the form of a 4-point Likert-scale with tick or circle items. A zero category is added to the scale to allow possibilities of no opinion or irrelevance as suggested by Lawless and Heymann (1998). Other designs involve ranking and multiple selection questions from a given list for generating the main goals of primary English teaching, characteristics of good pupils, understanding of learning as well teachers' roles in the classroom. The last section, Section IV, is mainly composed of open-ended questions for the purpose of exploring in depth the participants' conceptualisation of LC and factors affecting their opinions. Besides the open questions, there are also two other occasions where the participants are given opportunities to give further explanations to the questions concerned.

The categories used in the main questionnaire were developed based on (1) what I had read from the literature regarding learner-centred teaching; (2) aspects of teaching that I observed through my previous visits to schools; (3) other points identified or emerging during teacher training seminars; (4) views obtained from

piloting of the questionnaire and pilot interviews with six teachers. The questionnaire was first designed in English and then translated into Chinese for data collection. As the participants were all primary EFL teachers whose English competence might not be very high, Chinese was thought to be more comfortable for them to read and write.

4.3.3 Pilot study of the questionnaire

Before the main study took place, a pilot study was carried out. The purposes of the pilot study included (1) to test the feasibility of the questions designed to elicit the needed information for the main study on a larger teacher population; (2) to cut down to the essential areas in terms of the number of questions; (3) to ascertain the average response-time for completing the questionnaire; (4) to investigate any areas of ambiguity or doubt for the questions; (5) to find out if there were any missing points.

The pilot questionnaires were distributed to 92 primary EFL teachers during two in-service teacher training sessions in Beijing, one on Dec.30, 2003, the other on Jan. 17, 2004 respectively, with a return rate of 75% from the first trainee group (45 out of 60) and 87.5% from the second (28 out of 32), making up a total of 73 returned questionnaires. The time spent on completing the questionnaire ranged between 27 to 35 minutes with an average of 30 minutes. Among the 73 questionnaires collected, there was one invalid as it missed out all the questions on the back pages. As a result, a total number of 72 valid questionnaires were obtained. SPSS was applied to process, collate and analyse the data.

The last question in the piloted questionnaire asked teachers to comment on the questionnaire design and report any difficulties they experienced with it. More than 40 teachers explicitly reported that they found the questionnaire well-designed, very detailed and covering a wide range of questions. The main problems they identified with the questionnaire included (1) it was a bit too long; (2) open questions were not easy to answer; (3) there were some questions that overlapped or were repetitive; (4) the continuum provided for them to decide whether they were more teacher-centred or learner-centred was not easy to understand.

Immediately following the pilot questionnaire, an interview with six teachers was carried out for the purpose of finding out in depth teachers' perceptions of LC and getting feedback on the questionnaire.

A preliminary analysis showed that, in general, the questionnaire was well-designed. It elicited most of the information needed for the study. However, some questions needed to be reworded and some overlapping ones deleted. Overall, the number of questions needed to be reduced so as to leave more time for open questions. Also, explicit repetition on some questions needs to be avoided.

As a result of the pilot study, the following adjustments and revisions were made to the questionnaire:

1) Three questions were adapted in Part I in order to get more specific demographic information, e.g. the average number of hours teachers teach in a week; the average number of students in class for assessing accurately how large their classes are; the rewording of the question concerning what kind of in-service training they attended for the purpose of finding out whether they have attended any training in the last two years and what kind of training they have attended.

2) In Part I, one question was added to find out the usefulness of textbooks for implementing LAMP/LC as textbooks might have a direct influence on teachers' perceptions and behaviours to teaching. Lockheed and Verspoor *et al.* (1991) point out that the common situation is that the 'official, intended curriculum establishes broad guidelines for instruction, and teachers implement it using textbooks. In textbooks, the scope of the subject matter is defined and the sequence for instruction laid out. Textbooks are the major – if not the only-definition of the curriculum in most developing countries' (p.46). Thus, finding out how teachers view their textbooks in relation to the new curriculum seemed to be relevant.

3) Cross reference of beliefs and behaviours was more carefully worked out. Statements related to beliefs were reduced from 25 to 20 and behaviours from 34 to 20, making the two sets of questions more compatible and also equal in length and weight.

4) Five more teacher's roles were added based on the suggestion offered by the respondents to make teacher-centred roles and learner-centred roles more balanced. They are: consultant/helper, resource provider, learning companion, participant, making the total number of roles seventeen altogether. They can be divided into three groups:

Teacher-centred roles: knowledge provider, army commander, demonstrator, organiser, manager, assessor, discipline controller

Learner-centred roles: guide, parent, consultant/helper, resource provider, learning companion, participant

Unclassified roles: role model, gardener, actor, singer

5) One set of questions was added to the closed question section, which asked the respondents to self-assess themselves in terms of their language proficiency, devotion to teaching, personal capability to cope with the new curriculum and the general supportive atmosphere of their working contexts towards change. It is believed that these factors may have a strong effect on their take-up of LAMP/LC both in beliefs and in behaviours in the classroom.

6) Finally, a question was added to the open question section seeking for the respondents' opinions or their understanding of the two terms, "Learner-centredness' (LC), the imported Western ideology and 'Learners-as-main-participants' (LAMP), the term advocated by the Chinese government in the curriculum documents.

As the Chinese term 'LAMP' and English term 'LC' have slightly different meanings as explained in Section 2.3 and there is no ready translation of LAMP in English yet, it is considered useful to ask the respondents to explain whether the two terms mean the same or different things and explore further how the term 'LC' is accepted or interpreted by the Chinese teachers. Although in the government's curriculum documents, the Chinese term is used, teachers of English are not unfamiliar with the Western term of LC both in English and in Chinese as it has existed in the educational discourse particularly in English language teaching for a long time.

4.4 Qualitative data collection

4.4.1 The research context for observations and interviews

As already introduced in Chapter 2, China's educational reform began in 2001 with the introduction of NECS along with a number of new sets of textbooks. As English became a new school subject in primary schools, new teaching models or practices have been arduously experimented and good practices are just emerging rather than established. Therefore, open classes and seminars were often used as major in-service training activities for promoting good practice. The arena for

training often rotates among schools in the area so that different schools and different teachers can all get a chance to demonstrate their ways of teaching.

Gaining access to classrooms and teachers is often one of the most difficult tasks for a researcher carrying out classroom observations or conducting interviews with teachers. In my situation, this is not so much an issue considering my role as a teacher trainer from a prestigious teachers' university and someone who was responsible for developing the National English Curriculum. I traveled quite a lot in the past few years disseminating the ideology of NECS and trying to promote ELT innovations in schools. Moreover, I have also been involved in developing a set of new primary English textbooks; therefore, I have had the privilege of meeting teachers during in-service teacher training sessions in different parts of China, which has given me the opportunity to know personally quite a number of ELT advisers from local educational bureaus. However, this has both advantages and disadvantages as far as the current research is concerned. The advantages are that I am often more than welcomed by many local ELT advisers to support their in-service teacher training activities by giving talks or seminars to their teachers on the new curriculum or ELT methodology. As a result, I have easy access to schools, classrooms, and teachers through these local ELT advisers. Also importantly, all my travel expenses can be covered by local educational bureaus if an in-service training event is organised. However, the disadvantages are that as my visits to schools are often used as an important in-service teacher training opportunity, it is difficult for me to plan my own research in the way I want to, such as making individual visits to classrooms and interview teachers privately. Observation events of such kinds are often open to all local teachers and comments and seminars are expected of me after the observation. This is perfectly understandable as there is a lack of resources in many places for teachers to get chances to attend training workshops. Such an observation – of good teaching – should be used to its potential.

Another disadvantage is that it may not be possible for me to observe real natural lessons as both the teacher to be observed and the school that hosts the event

will have some pressure to be 'good' in their teaching performance, especially, as it was noted already that the event was often considered a good opportunity to raise the profile of the school. Furthermore, an evaluative comment is often expected of me after the observation to provide advice in teaching to all the participants. In these cases, teachers' special preparations for the lessons to be observed are naturally unavoidable. However, as such kind of teacher training activities have already become common practices for in-service training in China, both schools and teachers are more keen on observing natural lessons, there is less and less tendency of extra preparation given to the pupils before the lesson. As for teacher preparation, my argument would be that this should not constitute a problem. As the purpose of in-service training is to provide an exemplary lesson for discussing how those new curriculum ideas can be put into classroom practice, preparation for the lesson would at least make teachers think along the lines of the new curriculum and try to make the lesson reflect as closely as possible the ideology of the new curriculum. Therefore, as a showcase for good practice they are ideal for training purposes and for discussions. Thus, appropriate methodology for my research has to take into account the local contexts and to accommodate local ethics and needs. As pointed out by Denzin and Lincoln (1998), for qualitative research, the research practices depend on what is available in the context, and what the researcher can do in that setting. The question is how I could make the most out of the context to get a range of pictures of teaching and learning in classrooms as well as personal views from the teachers so as to transform the disadvantages by making a virtue of the necessity. Considering the above factors, three possible scenarios were envisaged based on my own knowledge of the context before the actual field work took place.

Scenario 1 The ideal situation

Ideally for the purpose of my research, through contacts with the local ELT advisers, some good teachers would be recommended and the schools concerned would allow me to observe the teachers in their normal classrooms with no interruption to the school timetables for my individual presence. Immediately after

the observation, the teacher would be available for my interview.

Scenario 2 The seminar situation

Through contacts with the relevant people, an observation event would be arranged with one or more recommended good teachers. However, the event would have to be used as an occasion for in-service teacher training for the whole district. A seminar would be expected of me after the observations to discuss what is observed in relation to the current ideology promoted by the new curriculum.

In this case, post observation interview would be difficult. However, a public interview might be a way to solve the problem. That is to say, an interview with the teacher who has just given the lesson would be conducted in public with all other teachers present and then other teachers who observed the lesson could also be invited to give comments before I offer mine about the lesson. However, the number of teachers involved in the observation should not exceed over 100.

Scenario 3 The school situation

Through contacts with the relevant people, I would be allowed to visit a school and observe two or three lessons in that school. The teachers would be recommended by the local educational authority as good teachers. At the same time other teachers in the school would be invited to participate in the observations. After the observation, a small group meeting would be organised for me to talk to the school teachers. In such a case, a focus group interview might be possible. The teachers who have just given their lessons would be invited to talk about their teaching principles and the design of the lesson as well as what actually happened during the lessons. Then some questions would be asked by me to these teachers who have just given their lessons. Other teachers would also be invited to give their views. Different opinions should be allowed to ensure that teachers express their views freely without any outside pressures.

4.4.2 Actual encounters

The field work took place between early-February and the end of April 2005 for three months. For visits outside of Beijing, contacts were made through the local ELT

advisers in different regions mainly by telephone. My intention for the observation was explained and I agreed to provide input to the in-service teacher training event. At the same time, I made clear that I would like to observe good teachers in their regions and if possible I would like to talk to the teachers either in public or in private. We agreed on a time feasible for both sides and the events took place as planned in different places (see Appendix 9 for observation and interview data-collection record).

For visits to schools within Beijing, contacts were made with two ELT advisers from two districts and I was recommended 5 teachers. For three of the teachers, I contacted them individually and through them I got permission from their head teachers to observe their lessons privately in their classrooms and also to interview them after the observations. For another school, I contacted the deputy head teacher of the school and made arrangements for my visit to the school and observed two lessons with the presence of their school English teachers after which a small group discussion was arranged with all the English teachers from the school present. The deputy head teacher also agreed to be interviewed after the observations. As a result of all the efforts, direct and live observations of twenty-one recommended teachers were carried out from the cities of Beijing, Tianjin, Fu'an, Shenzhen, Zhongshan, Mianyang and Chengdu situated in the north, south, and southwest of China.

The three scenarios envisaged before the actual field work was undertaken all took place in one form or another with a few unexpected circumstances where adjustments had to be made. The first scenario – the ideal situation – happened in Beijing with three individual teachers observed and interviewed from two schools. Two teachers were observed in one school on one morning, after which I interviewed them in a pair and another teacher was observed and then interviewed in a different school. .

The second scenario – the seminar situation – took place in Tianjin Primary School attached to Tianjin Normal University, Tianjin Machangdao Primary School, Yongkangzhen Primary School in Zhongshan, Fu'an Shifanfuxiao and Fu'an Experimantal Primary School in Fu'an, Huaqiaocheng Primary School and Luoling

Foreign Language Primary School in Shenzhen. Altogether, eight teachers were recommended for observation with two in Tianjin, two in Zhongshan, two in Fu'an, and two in Shenzhen. The lessons observed in Tianjin, Fu'an and Shenzhen were attended by 40-60 teachers while the two lessons in Zhongshan were attended by over 200 teachers. In all these occasions, teaching did not take place in ordinary classrooms but in bigger than normal classrooms or lecture halls where the front was made into a classroom setting. In Tianjin, teachers' self reflections were given followed by a public interview which proved not quite successful as both the teachers who gave the lessons and the group attended the observations were found very shy to give their opinions in public. In Zhongshan, the event was attended by over 200 teachers. Because the school was located in the countryside, we had to travel in the morning during the rush hour and were about an hour late for the two observations. As a result, there was no time either for teacher-reflections or public interviews. In Fu'an, the two teachers observed gave their self-reflections on their lessons conducted respectively and a public interview and group discussion followed. In Luoling Foreign Language Primary School, due to time constraints, no reflection or interview was made. A public interview was made in Huaqiaocheng Primary School in Shenzhen after the observation.

The third scenario – the school situation - was encountered in Shiyoufuxiao Primary School in Beijing, Liangshuijing Primary School in Chengdu, Longjianglu Primary School in Chengdu, and Mianyang Foreign Languages School in Mianyang. Altogether, nine teachers from four schools were observed and four focus group interviews were organised. Each occasion was attended by as few as six teachers to as many as thirty teachers. Except Shiyoufuxiao Primary School in Beijing and Mianyang Foreign Languages School in Mianyang, where the observations and interviews were attended only by the English teachers from those two schools, observations and focus group interviews in the other two schools were also attended by teachers from nearly schools in the local district/city. As it was common practice for all the teachers who observed lessons to attend a discussion after the observation,

it was not difficult for me to do a focus group interview with all the teachers who participated in the observation except in one situation, the group discussion was chaired by a local ELT adviser, who diverted the discussion focus to the evaluation of the lesson observed and issues related to the use of textbooks. As we can see, in most occasions, more than one lesson was arranged in the same school so that teachers who came for the observation event could make the most of their time and opportunity to learn more from others. In the case of focus group interviews, precautions were taken to allow ideas by different teachers so that they would not feel that they were answering questions from an 'expert' or 'outsider'.

4.4.3. Methods of data collection – Observations

As far as observation studies are concerned, there are different approaches that serve different research purposes (Allwright, 1988; Croll, 1986). In a less structured observation, 'the observer neither manipulates nor stimulates the behaviours of those whom they are observing' (Punch 1998) and the data to be recorded are broad and general. In a structured observation, more detailed and carefully prepared schedules are required (Croll, 1986). In this approach, the researcher determines what to look for in advance (Croll, 1986; Robinson, 1993, Punch, 1998).

The present study followed a less structured approach. Data was composed mainly of observation notes with almost all the lessons tape-recorded to enable transcription for later analysis. As the intention of this study was to examine typical features of LAMP/LC in Chinese primary EFL classrooms, pre-determined observation schedules were thought inappropriate. As far as observation notes are concerned, lesson topics, grade levels, number of pupils, classroom layout, major learning stages and key classroom activities were recorded in a general manner together with my own comments about the lessons.

4.4.4 Methods of data collection – interviews

Interviews played a special role in my research as they could be used with the purpose of helping to probe deeper into the reasoning and thinking behind the teaching behaviours of the teachers observed. The subjects who participated in the

interviews were teachers recommended for observations as well as those who attended the observations. However, interviews were only done when possible, as space and time needed to be negotiated with each school or district I visited. Also, as all interviews had to be done after observations, arrangements proved difficult on some occasions due to time constraints. Therefore, interviews were conducted only where contexts permitted during the school visits. Interviews were carried out either individually, or in pairs, or in focus groups, or in public depending on different occasions.

In this study, an individual interview refers to a situation where a one to one interview between the interviewer and interviewee is conducted. A focus group interview, defined by Berg (2004:123), is an interview style designed for a small group of subjects. During the interview, the researcher leads the discussion and encourages participants to exchange ideas and discuss issues among themselves (Buckingham and Saunders, 2004). According to Edmunds (1999), focus group interviews can be either guided or unguided discussions addressing a particular topic of interest relevant to the group and the researcher. As regarding how big or small a focus group can be, there is disagreement in the literature ranging from six to twelve (Berg, 2004:143). It is suggested by Berg (ibid) that for a complex research question, a smaller size of five to seven is more appropriate and effective. As regarding the benefits of focus group interviews, there are divisions of opinions. One reservation is the possibility that participants may be influencing each other's ideas and giving comments based on what others have said. However, Berg (2004:124) sees more advantages in focus group interviews. He believes:

> When focus groups are administered properly, they are extremely dynamic. Interaction among and between group members stimulates discussions in which one group member reacts to comments made by another.... [It] allows one participant to draw from another or to brainstorm collectively with other members of the group.

It is true that such occasions in my study served as opportunities to generate more views, topics and issues and stimulated new sparks of ideas, but in such

circumstances, the researcher's role had to be adjusted from a prominent interviewer to a role of a facilitator to allow different opinions and perspectives to emerge and to develop.

When a group participating in the interview got larger than twelve and it was not possible to divide them into smaller groups, a public interview was thought to be a more appropriate way to establish a way of communication with the subject teacher and to engage other participating teachers. A public interview refers to the exchange which takes place between the interviewer and interviewee in front of a number of others and such an exchange becomes a 'conscious social performance' (Berg, 2004:102). There are basically two conditions at least, according to Berg (2004) for a successful public interview. First, the interviewee must be familiar with the context and has things to say, which are not personally offending or intimidating. Secondly, the interviewer needs to be very skilful in formulating questions to make the interviewee feel relaxed and motivated to reveal her thoughts or views in front of a public audience.

In the case of my research, two individual interviews, one paired interview, four focus group interviews, and three public interviews were conducted. No interviews were conducted in two occasions due to time constraints or inappropriate circumstances, e.g. the group was too large (exceeding two hundred teachers) or the ELT adviser who chaired the training session shifted the focus of the discussion on my comments about the lessons observed. Teacher reflections on the lessons given were carried out in most of the situations and almost all teachers' self-reflections and focus group interviews/discussions were audio-taped except battery failures in Fu'an for the two lessons observed and a public interview conducted. As a result, the two lessons had to be excluded from the study. The purpose of the interviews/discussions was to clarify points noted from the observations and further explore the beliefs, assumptions and opinions teachers held which underlay their teaching behaviours or decisions. Open-ended interview questions were designed for such circumstances (see Appendix 10 and 11 for the English and Chinese versions respectively).

Except for two individual observations I made in which I had to go through the official gatekeeper, for all other school visits, I was taken into the schools

accompanied by local ELT advisers and received by the head-teachers formally. Quite a number of schools even put up welcoming posters for my visit.

Although an interview schedule was developed before the actual observation took place in order to keep the research focused, in the actual interviews, some of the questions prepared were found somehow too theoretical for the teachers to respond to immediately after the observations. As a result, adjustments had to be done to make the questions more accessible to both the teacher who had just given the public lesson followed by a self-reflection and the other participating teachers. The focus group interviews were carried out in less structured manner, during which time I engaged the participating teachers in a more conversational style. Instead of using a list of formal questions, I just used a list of key themes or sometimes even allowed the conversation to flow with no fixed agenda (Buckingham and Saunders, 2004)

4.4.5 Experiences and lessons learned from conducting interviews

Conducting interviews is no easy task as Kvale (1996:13) points out that it requires a high level of skill in the interviewer, who needs to be knowledgeable about the interview topic and to be familiar with the methodological options available, as well as having a grasp of the conceptual issues of producing knowledge through conversation. I must honestly admit that I learned a lot from my own experiences in conducting different kinds of interviews particularly focus group and public interviews.

First, it was very challenging to conduct public interview in front of an audience. I had to first of all make decisions about what questions to ask in each case following the observations and the teacher's self-reflections. I had to decide what aspects of the subject's answer to follow or not to follow. In most cases, I could not simply follow the interview guide exactly as prepared as I felt that I had to make my questions more relevant to the lesson observed and to the self-reflection given by the teacher. On the other hand, I had to make sure that 'essential' questions were asked (Berg, 2004:85). The problem was that I had not much time to think carefully about the most relevant and appropriate questions to ask. It would have been much easier if interviews had

been conducted on a one-to-one basis. In a public interview, the pressure was very strong and with little experience, it was extremely challenging. It was not uncommon that I found myself searching my brain desperately for relevant questions. Secondly, as interviews often happened after two consecutive lessons and comments were expected of me on each of the lessons observed, there was great pressure on me not only to think about relevant questions to ask – relevant in terms of my research and also relevant to the context, but also to make appropriate comments or constructive suggestions for the improvement of the lessons. Thirdly, as an interviewer, I also had to take care to allow the interviewees to say what they wished to say and try to follow their points to explore further. All these required special skills and experience to be able to give spontaneous reactions or response to the issues brought from the interview. Fourthly, the style of the exchanges had to be relaxed. Moreover, the researcher needs to give wait time after a question is proposed, especially for probing questions. When I listened afterwards to the interview recordings, I found that sometimes I did not wait long enough for responses. I was too eager to either repeat the question or explain the question again. Finally, the researcher should give up all his/her assumptions about the teachers when asking questions. However, for conducting interviews, the truth is, practice remains the main road to mastering the craft and the interviewer's confidence is acquired through practice (Kvale, 1996).

4.5 Ethics regarding the field work

Ethics is not considered an issue in my field work given the particular position I hold as discussed in 4.4.1 and its cultural implications. Normally informed consents for observations and interviews were agreed upon at the top level in the hierarchy of the local educational and school structures, in this case between me and the local ELT advisers through telephone communications. The local ELT adviser would then inform the head teachers through whom the teachers to be observed. As a collective culture, it is more important to get informed consent from the authorities rather than from individual teachers. Also, with top level consent, there is usually no difficulty getting individual consent. In practice, informal ways of communication through

networks work more efficiently than formal, such as writing a formal letter for permission. In the case of a formal letter, it may well make things more complicated because a formal agreement will need several meetings at different levels before it gets through and usually takes longer especially when it is not coming from the top. As individual teachers are not in the position to allow outsiders to observe their lessons without asking consent from their subject group leaders and then the school management team, they usually would not want to take the trouble or the responsibility unless they either know you well in the profession or recognise you as someone important for them and for their school. In other words, getting informed consent from the top level of the hierarchy is the most efficient way to get things done in the cultural context of the present study and a teacher training session is negotiated as a trade-off for the study. Throughout my visit to 13 schools, I only made personal contacts with three individual teachers from two schools in Beijing, who were recommended to me by their respective ELT advisers and I had no difficulty obtaining informed consents from both the teachers and their head teachers as they all know me by name.

As the present research was contributing to local teacher training and to facilitating curriculum reform, it was offering benefits rather than harm to both the subjects and to the schools. Therefore, teachers recommended for observation all felt greatly honoured to be observed as they considered it an opportunity to learn and to grow professionally in spite of the fact that some of them admitted honestly that they were quite nervous and did not sleep well the night before in order to get fully prepared for the lesson. Local educational authorities were also very grateful for my visit to these schools because it helped them in teacher training and in promoting the new ideology in the new curriculum. Quite a number of teachers expressed their appreciations for my comments on their lessons.

During the school visits, there was no problem for anybody to take pictures or make recordings. As such kind of observations were meant to be public for in-service teacher training, teachers and children were all used to photos and audios. It was also

quite common to videotape a lesson as long as permission is obtained from the school where event was taking place so that other teachers who were unable to attend the observation may have a chance to view it afterwards if wished. As the observation events took place like all normal in-service training sessions, data collected should represent the most natural data that a training session could provide with teachers' self-reflections and discussions on the lessons and views regarding the implementation of the new curriculum.

4.6 Data analysis procedures

4.6.1 Questionnaire data analysis

Data collected through the questionnaire consisted of both closed and open responses. For closed responses, SPSS was applied and basic statistical analyses were carried out to generate the results on which my discussions were based. As the purpose of this study was not to find out differences among sub-groups, the basic statistical analyses focused mainly on frequency and descriptive analysis of the whole group which were considered adequate for the particular aims and objectives set out for the current study although a number of tests regarding potential influences resulting from differences in age groups, years of teaching experiences and geographical locations were carried out for investigative purposes. Factor analysis was carried out to confirm the previously proposed dimensional structures (Punch, 1998) or to assess the factorial validity of the questions which made up the scales (Bryman and Cramer, 2001) regarding learner-centred and teacher-centred beliefs and behaviours used in the questionnaire survey. However, there was full awareness that many additional multiple levels of statistical analysis were possible with the data using SPSS.

Open responses were obtained from five open spaces in the questionnaire which allowed further explanations from the respondents regarding (1) their particular choice of teaching approaches; (2) the context in which they work; (3) characteristics of LAMP/LC in the classroom; (4) differences between LC and LAMP; and (5) the benefits and difficulties for promoting LAMP/LC. 786 participants out of 1000

(78.6%) gave responses to one or more of the five open questions. All the responses were word-processed, number-coded and tabulated. Potentially important themes and sub-themes were identified and quantification of data using EXCEL was applied to generate numbers and charts on different themes or categories for data presentation and discussion where appropriate. Before the actual analysis of the data from open questions, a pilot analysis was undertaken based on a translated version of 113 participants' responses to the five questions. An 'inter-coder reliability check' (Berg, 2004:40) of categorisations through content analysis was undertaken respectively by myself and one of my supervisors. A consensus was reached on most of the major categories and subcategories. Issues in categorisation were discussed and then agreed upon. The purpose of the pilot analysis was (1) to ensure reliability regarding categorisation; (2) to prepare myself for the appropriate approach and procedures needed for analysing the main data; and (3) to prepare myself with confidence in dealing with large quantities of open response data. The main study was then undertaken based on the data originally collected in Chinese to avoid unnecessary misinterpretation or inconsistency that may result from translations concerning key words and key concepts.

4.6.2 Observation data analysis

As already presented in 4.4.3, the observation data was collected with an open mind with most lessons audio-recorded and notes taken about the physical environment and content of all the lessons observed along with some researcher's comments. The checking of the audio-tapes showed that two lessons observed in Fu'an were not recorded properly because of technical problems. Transcriptions proved difficult. Another lesson observed in Chengdu was later found to be from a new teacher with less than one year of teaching experience. As a result, three lessons were dropped, leaving 18 lessons representing good practices. For analysis purposes, all the 18 lessons were transcribed although not in a very highly technical way but enough for examining the duration and types of different activities and catching the main classroom interactions patterns. The decision to transcribe the lessons was based

on the three criteria proposed by Richards (2003:199), namely, 'fitness for purpose, adequacy and accuracy' just to ensure that it serves the needs for the research but at the same time to keep things simple so that a quick transcription can be achieved with the most honest representation of those lessons. Once the lesson transcripts were done, Nvivo 2 (a software for analysing qualitative data), was applied to help organise and analyse the data. A detailed rationale for analysing the observation data is presented in Section 6.2.

4.6.3 Interview data analysis

The interview data included individual interviews, paired interviews, focus group interviews and public interviews along with teachers' self-reflections. All interviews and teacher reflections were audio-recorded and then transcribed. Content analysis was used and themes emerged around the topics concerning the understanding of LAMP/LC, views about children, views on learner differences, and views on the roles of the teacher in a LAMP/LC classroom and concerns over the curriculum reform. As interview data is to be used mainly to complement and supplement observation data and triangulate with the questionnaire data, they are thus presented alongside observation data wherever relevant for revealing salient points, insights or for understanding the underlying assumptions or beliefs underlying the teaching behaviours observed. They are presented in the form of direct quotations from the teachers.

4.7 My role as a researcher in the current research

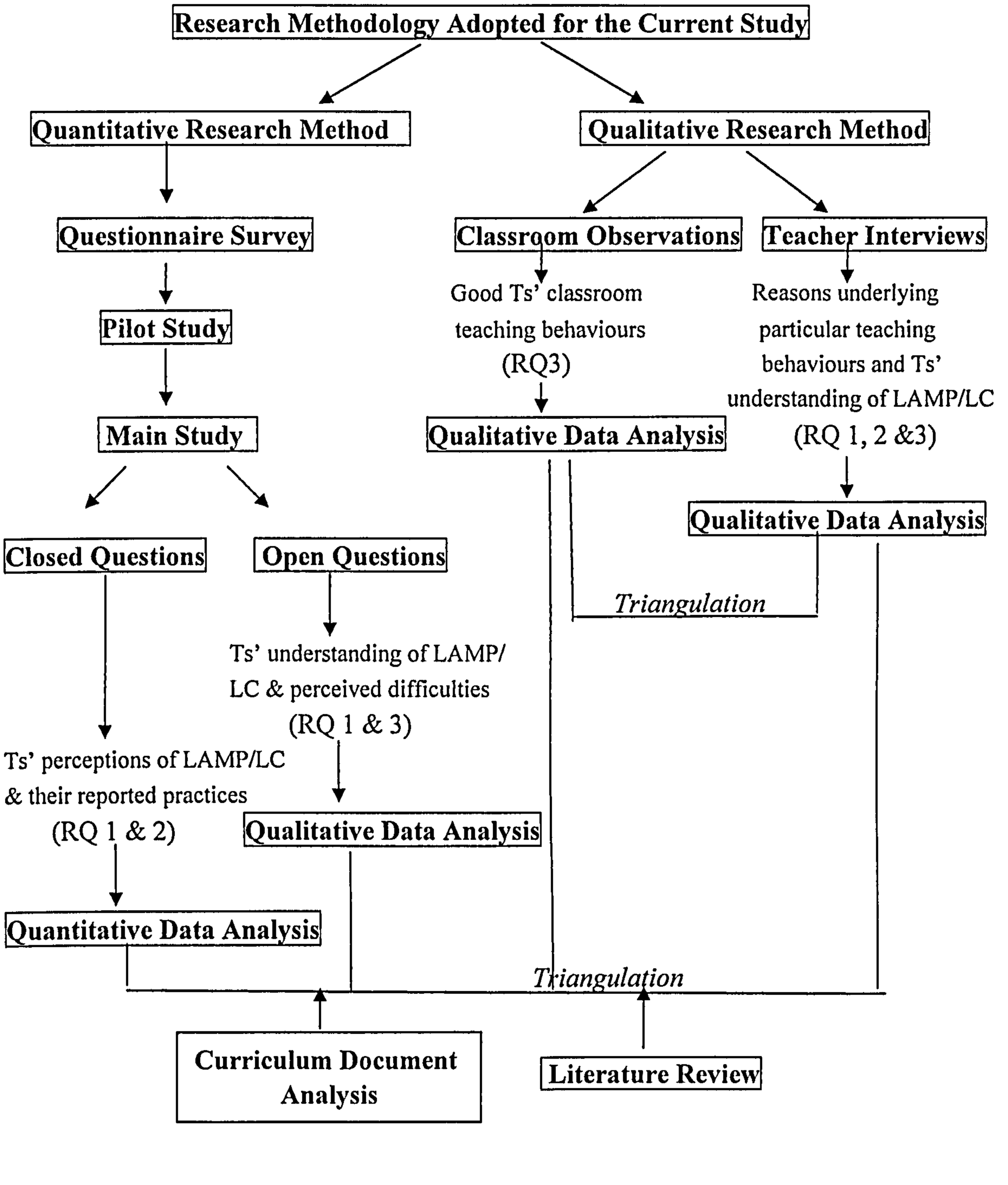
From a strictly positivist research tradition, in any research, the researcher is expected to remain as objective as possible. Many researchers also recommend that social science research should maintain a value-neutral position. However, in recent years, a number of social researchers have argued against such a facade of value neutral position. Berg (2004) makes the remark that 'research is seldom, if ever, really value neutral' (p.155). The researcher cannot possibly be always objective, authoritative, and politically neutral standing outside the context, but he or she is 'historically positioned and locally situated as an observer of the human condition

(Punch, 1998:146). It is obviously true that the selection of research topics cannot be separated from the social and professional background within which the researcher is situated with available conditions as well as his or her personal interests and motivations. In other words, research is seldom undertaken for a neutral reason (Berg, 2004) and social researchers are part of the social world they study (Punch, 1998). Therefore, it is unavoidable that various values, moral attitudes and beliefs will consciously or unconsciously orient the researcher in a particular way. In fact, maintaining the facade of neutrality prevents a researcher from examining his or her cultural assumptions (Rubin and Rubin, 1995) and it also prevents readers from getting a true picture of the research. For this reason, although throughout the research process I remained as an independent researcher, my previous and current roles as a teacher trainer and curriculum developer were not hidden but have been openly discussed at the beginning of the thesis. In other words, I hold both an insider and an outsider role in this research, which gives me both advantages and disadvantages. As a curriculum developer and teacher trainer, I am a preacher of the new curriculum and I am inspired by its ideology. In this sense, I am an insider. As an insider, I am familiar with the context and personally understand what the curriculum requires and expects. I also know many ELT specialists and teachers who can provide any assistance for my research. At the same time, I may well be unconsciously influenced by my position to view and analyse things in a more closed or restricted way. For this reason, I need to assume the role of an outsider for the validity and reliability of the research. That is to say, I need to be an independent researcher to investigate the process of implementation avoiding as much as possible my subjective influence on the process and product of the research. By disclosing my subjective position, I have allowed readers to gain a better understanding about the purpose for which this research area was selected, how it was studied, what my role was and what professional background I came from as a researcher. With the researcher's voice, the reader will gain better insights into the world of research while evaluating the results, findings and analysis (Berg, 2004).

4.8 Summary of the approach adopted for the current research

This chapter introduced the research methodology for the current research. In order to answer the three sets of research questions proposed for the study, a mixed mode of research methodology was adopted combining quantitative with qualitative using a variety of data collection instruments. The quantitative data was collected through a large scale questionnaire survey using convenience samples while the qualitative data was collected through classroom observations of recommended good practices. Interviews were conducted with the teachers who gave either public lessons or lessons that were observed only by the researcher. Teachers who attended the public lessons were also interviewed. Analysis procedures of both the quantitative and qualitative data were briefly introduced before issues regarding ethics and the researcher role in the study were discussed. Figure 4.1 below summarises the overall methodological approach for the current study.

Figure 4.1 Methodological Framework for the current study



CHAPTER 5 QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the analysis of the quantitative data collected through a questionnaire survey which was designed for the purposes of finding out answers to the first two sets of research questions: (1) What are Chinese teachers' general attitudes towards and beliefs about LAMP/LC in the context of primary EFL in China? (2) What are teachers' reported practices, approaches to teaching, and factors affecting their practices and choice of approaches? Data collected through the questionnaire (N=1000) was processed using SPSS with regard to all the closed questions. Data from open questions were all word-processed, number-coded and tabulated question by question (see Data-coding sheets in Appendix 13 for examples). The following presents the findings from both the closed and open questions. Demographic information of the participants in the survey is presented first as such information constitutes an important basis for understanding, interpreting, and discussing the data. Then findings concerning teachers' beliefs and reported practices of their classroom teaching, their reactions towards LAMP/LC, and their assessment of their teaching approaches and teaching contexts are presented. These are followed by an examination of the perceived benefits and difficulties for implementing the new ideology as well as features of a LAMP/LC classroom as identified by these teachers.

5.2 Demographic information of the participants under survey

Like most situations in primary schools, the English teaching profession is comprised prevailingly of female teachers. Out of the 1000 respondents, 919 were females and only 74 were males (with 7 missing data), resulting in a contrasting percentage of 92.5 versus 7.5 (see Figure 5.1). The age groups fell overwhelmingly between 20-29 and 30-39 with 69.7 % in their 20s and 26.7% in their 30s. Only 3% were aged between 40-49, who were mainly from big cities like Beijing where English has been offered in primary schools since the late 1980s (see Figure 5.2).

Their primary English teaching experiences ranged from 1-2 years to over 20 years. However, 52.5 % of them had either two or less than two years of primary teaching experience, indicating a very new and young English teaching profession in the primary sector. With 24.5% and 11.5% having had 3-5 or 6-9 years of teaching experience, just a little more than 10% of the teachers surveyed had more than 10 years of experience teaching English in primary schools and they mostly came from Beijing, Hebei and Guangdong Province (see Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.1 Gender

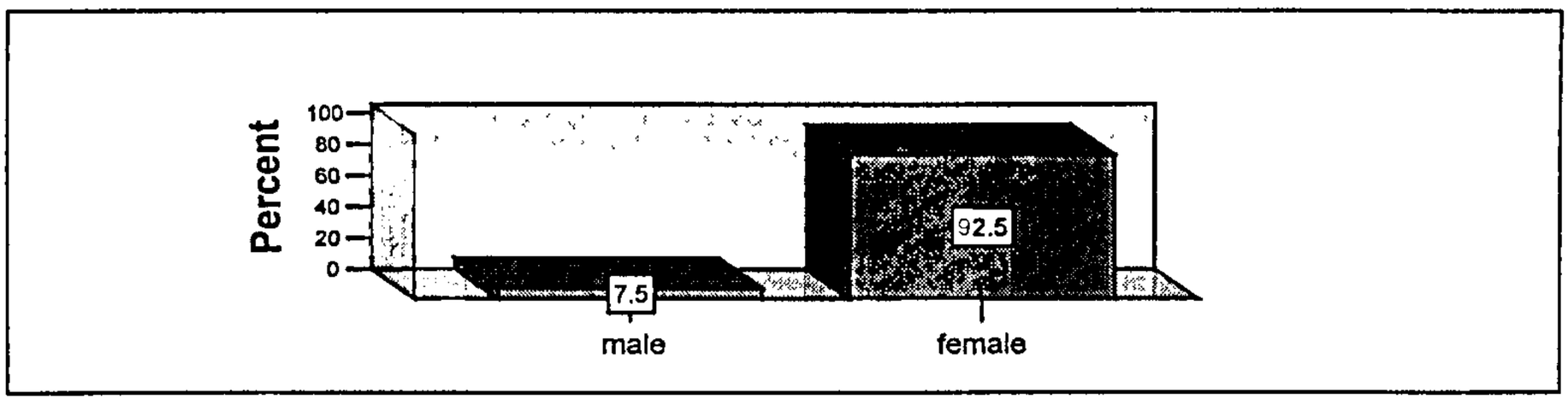


Figure 5.2 Age groups

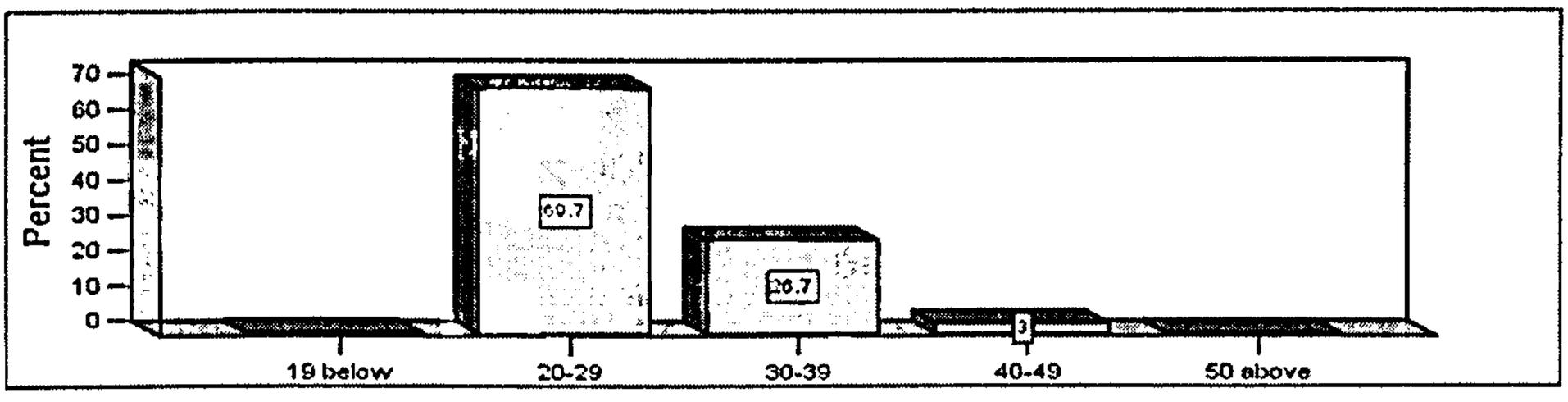
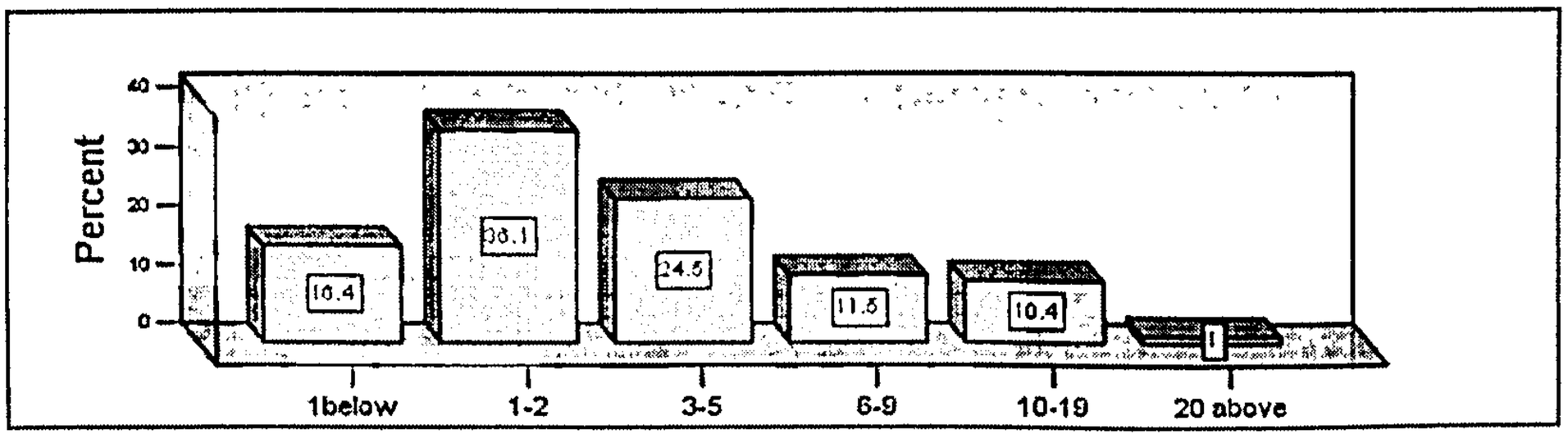


Figure 5.3 Years of primary English teaching experience



Regarding the degrees held by the respondents, over 90% held degrees above the level of a college certificate which is the minimum qualification requirement from the

Ministry of Education for teaching in the primary school. However, among those who were on paper qualified for teaching in the primary school, only 53.1% held a degree in English while about 40% held degrees other than English and 6.6 % held only a secondary degree. For Hubei and Fujian province, the number of teachers holding a degree in English fell to an even lower percentage, with 25.6% and 36.4% respectively (see Appendix 12 for details). That is to say, quite a large number of primary English teachers have had no formal training in the subject matter. It also needs to be pointed out that many of those who are new to the profession with or without an English degree are unlikely to have been trained to teach English in primary schools. They are just new graduates from any colleges or universities. This is a direct result from the rapid expansion of primary English during the past few years since it was formally added into the primary curriculum in 2001 (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 Degrees obtained

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	English BA	126	12.6	12.6	12.6
	Non-Engish BA	83	8.3	8.3	20.9
	English Certificate	405	40.5	40.5	61.5
	Non-English Certificate	319	31.9	31.9	93.4
	Secondary Degrees	66	6.6	6.6	100.0
	Total	999	99.9	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.1		
Total		1000	100.0		

However, the composite of the degree levels of this cohort of participants may have well represented a slightly better picture of the reality as quite a number of them come from places such as Beijing, Chengdu in Sichuan and Zhongshan in Guangdong, Shijiazhuang in Hebei where English has been offered for around 10 years or more at the primary phase with more teachers holding qualifications in English and more years of EFL teaching experiences (see also Figure 5.3 above).

The following presents information on the workload the respondents had at the time of the survey. As can be seen from Table 5.2, the class size in primary schools shows considerable variation. The average number of pupils per class varies from as small as 8 to as large as 120 with an average of 50. The number of classes (groups of

children) one teacher meets ranges from 1 to 17. Among them, 45.2% teach between 4-6 classes a week, 17% teach between 7-9 classes and another 3.8% teach 10-12 classes (see Table 5.3). As regarding the teaching hours, they also vary greatly, from a minimum of 2 hours a week to a maximum of 22 with the mean being 13.44 and the mode16, which means the most frequent number of hours the respondents teach per week is 16. Nearly 40% of the respondents teach between 15-20 hours a week and 10% teach more than 20 hours a week (see Table 5.4). Figure 5.4 below provides information about the grade levels the respondents under survey are involved in teaching. Due to the fact that many of them teach more than one grades as shown in Table 5.5, the number of teachers teaching each grade overlaps across grades. What we can find is that there are slightly more teachers involved in teaching grade 3, 4, and 5 than those involved in teaching grade 1, 2 and 6. This may result from the fact that English is being offered at the grade 1 level only in big cities like Beijing while in smaller cities and towns, English is offered from grade 3. By the time when this survey was done, children who started English from grade 3 in 2001 had entered grade 6 while children who started English from grade 1 had entered grade 4. Overall, the grade levels the respondents teach are quite well-balanced across grades. Table 5.5 shows that while 42.3% of the respondents teach one grade level, over 50% teach between 2- 3 grade levels and 12 teachers out of 1000 teach six grade levels – they are possibly the only English teacher in those schools.

Table 5.2 Statistics on pupils, classes, and teaching hours

	Number of pupils per class	Number of classes per teacher	Number of pupils per teacher	Number of teaching hours per week
Maximum	120	17	980	30
Minimum	8	1	18	2
Standard Deviation	13.70	2.39	149.97	5.44
Mean	49.9	4.7	241.2	13.06
Mode	50	4	200	16

Table 5.3 Statistics on the range of classes one teaches in a week

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-3 classes	326	32.6	33.5	33.5
	4-6 classes	440	44.0	45.2	78.7
	7-9 classes	170	17.0	17.5	96.2
	10-13 classes	37	3.7	3.8	100.0
	Total	973	97.3	100.0	
Missing		27	2.7		
Total		1000	100.0		

Table 5.4 Summary of number of hours one teaches

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	below 9 hours	247	25.3	26.0	26.0
	10-14 hours	241	24.7	25.4	51.4
	15-19 hours	375	38.4	39.5	90.9
	above 20	86	8.8	9.1	100.0
	Total	949	97.2	100.0	
Missing		27	2.8		
Total		976	100.0		

Figure 5.4 Grade levels teachers teach

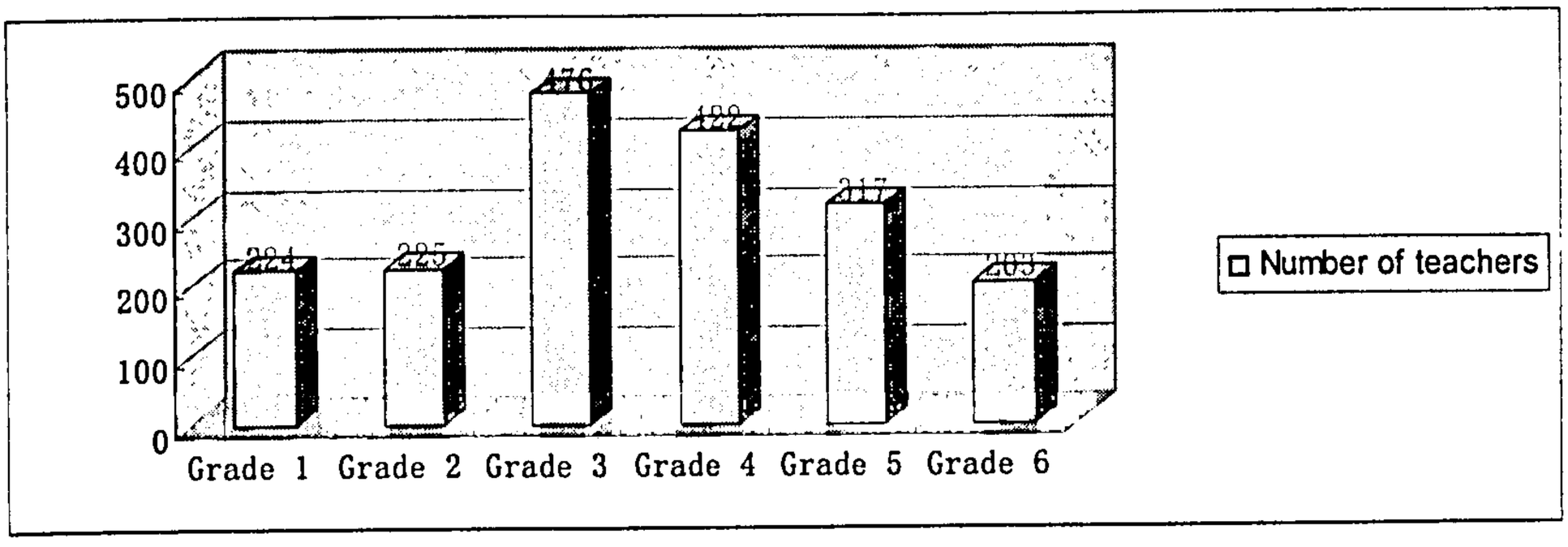


Table 5.5 Summary of number of grades one teaches

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	One grade	414	41.4	42.3	42.3
	Two grades	369	36.9	37.7	80.0
	Three grades	123	12.3	12.6	92.5
	Four grades	53	5.3	5.4	98.0
	Five grades	8	.8	.8	98.8
	Six grades	12	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	979	97.9	100.0	
Missing		21	2.1		
Total		1000	100.0		

As regarding training, 92.7% reported that they had received some kind of in-service training during the past two years while 7.3% had not. Among those who received training, 71.8% had training on the new curriculum; 65.1% on the new textbooks; 69.4% attended conferences and seminars on language teaching; 42.7% attended methodology workshops, and 20.8% had training by observing lessons. A small number also attended oral English classes and ICT lessons. The forms of training received are listed the in order of frequency as the following:

(1) On the new curriculum 71.8%;
(2) By attending seminars and conferences 69.4%;
(3) On new textbooks 65.1%;
(4) On TEFL methodology 42.7%
(5) By observing demo lessons 20.8%
(6) Other: oral English lessons 7.3%

Figure 5.5 Location (Urban vs. Rural)

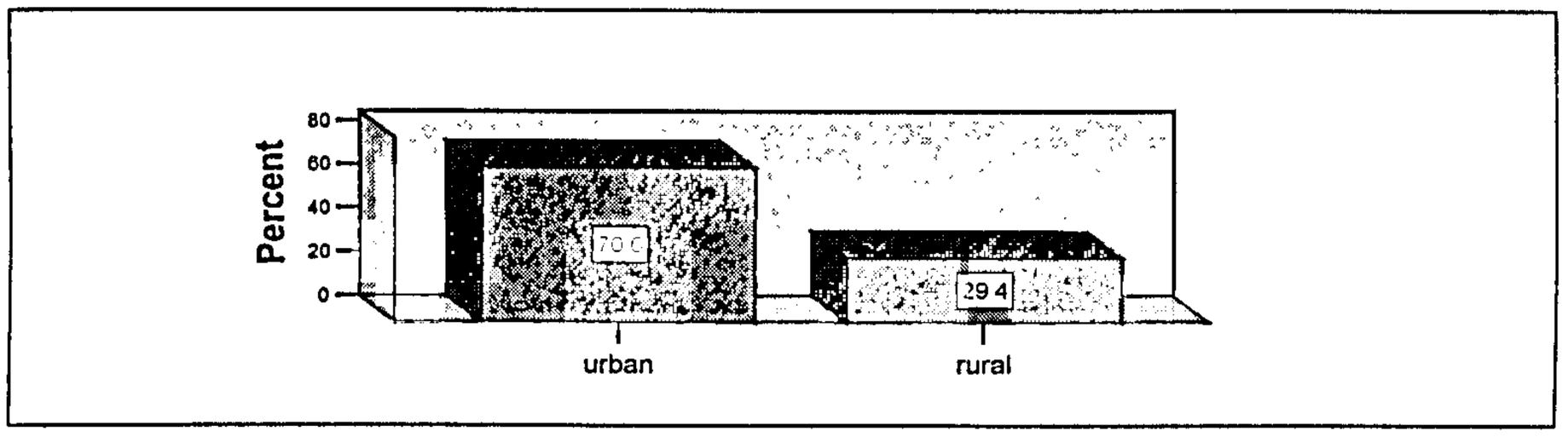


Figure 5.5 above showed that 70.6% of the teachers surveyed were from urban schools while 29.4 % from rural schools, which indicates that teachers participated in the survey came from more or less developed regions.

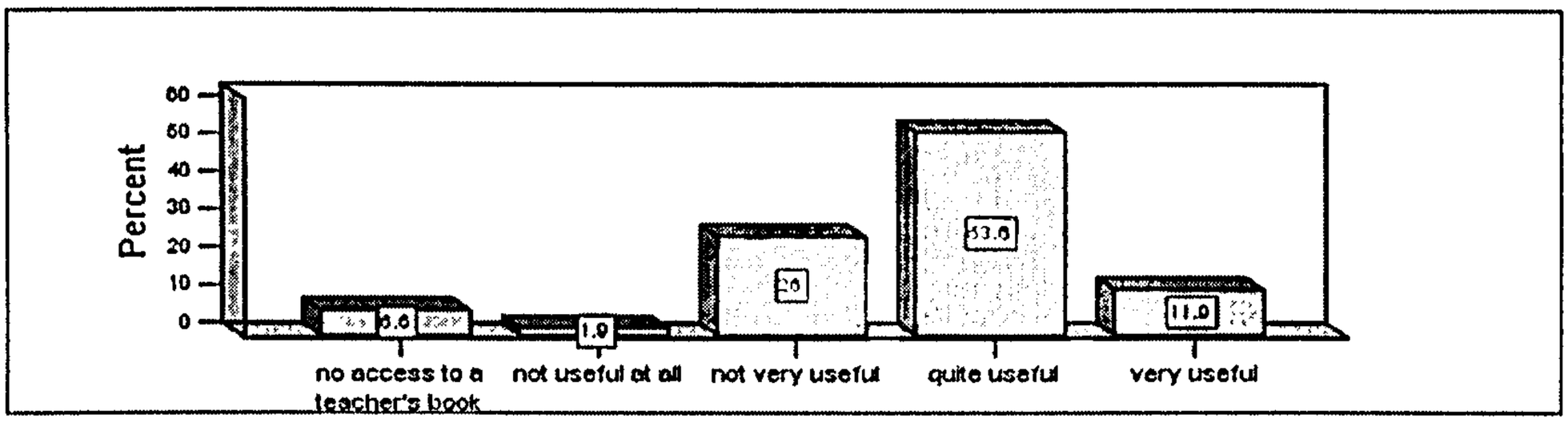
According to the data collected, there were more than 16 different textbooks being used by these teachers. Overwhelmingly, 93.8% of the teachers thought that the textbooks they used reflected, at least to a certain extent, the ideology of the new curriculum, among which 23.7% believed that the textbooks reflected the new curriculum to a great extent. Only a very small number of these teachers did not think the textbooks they used reflected the new curriculum (See Table 5.6).

Table 5.6 How much does the textbook reflect the new curriculum?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	not at all	9	.9	.9	.9
	very little	53	5.3	5.3	6.2
	to a certain extent	699	69.9	70.1	76.3
	to a great extent	236	23.6	23.7	100.0
	Total	997	99.7	100.0	
Missing	99.00	3	.3		
Total		1000	100.0		

As regarding teachers' books, 66% of the respondents thought that the Teacher's Book they used was either quite useful or very useful while nearly 28% did not think so. At the same time, 6.5% reported that they did not have access to a teacher's book (See Figure 5.6).

Figure 4.6 How useful is the Teacher's Book?



To summarise briefly at this point, we can see that an overwhelming majority of the teachers who participated in this study were females (92.5%) mostly coming from urban primary schools (71%). Most of them had a heavy load of teaching, meeting an average of 200 children and teaching an average of 16 hours a week. Their classes had on average 50 children and many taught an average of 5 classes and some across 2-4 different grades. These teachers were all in their mid-20s (70%) and mid-30s (27%) with more than 50 % having just two years or less than two years of teaching experience in primary English. As regarding their qualifications, although more than 90% satisfied the government's primary teachers' qualification requirement – minimum of a three-year college certificate, nearly half of them held a degree or certificate other than English. As regarding training, about one third of the

teachers had not participated in training on the new curriculum or the new textbooks at the time of the survey.

5.3 Primary English teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning

There were altogether six sets of questions designed to elicit teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning. The first set of questions aimed to tackle the general beliefs these teachers held towards primary English with 20 sub-statements devised on a 4-point Likert-scale ranging from strongly agree to disagree. A zero category '0' was used for each statement to allow the respondents the flexibility to show irrelevance or unacceptability of the choices offered. The second set of questions attempted to elicit the respondents' opinions on the general goals of primary school education. Altogether 18 sub-statements were given stating the possible goals of primary English education; the respondents were to choose among them five most important ones concerning primary English education and rank them in the order of importance from the most important to the least important in the boxes given (see Appendix 7 and 8 for the questionnaire in Chinese and English respectively).

The third set of questions accessed the respondents' views on the roles of the teacher in a language classroom. They had to decide first what roles a teacher should play in a primary classroom and then what roles they thought they had played well. The next two sets of questions tried to elicit from the respondents their views on the characteristics of a good pupil and their understanding of 'learning'. The section ended with two simple and straightforward questions with one question asking the respondents to give their reaction(s) towards LAMP/LC and the other to assess their own teaching approach -whether more teacher-centred or learner-centred. A continuum with TC and LC at each end and seven consecutive boxes in between was provided for the respondents to decide on their own approaches along the continuum.

The following presents the analysis of the data related to the above questions.

5.3.1 General beliefs held concerning LC and TC.

There were altogether 20 sub-statements tackling the respondents' general beliefs concerning teaching objectives and classroom pedagogy. They cover areas of

how language should be taught - whether it should be memorised mechanically as a knowledge system or whether it should be taught experientially through children's active participation in the learning process. The former view is known to underlie the teacher-centred approach while latter underlies the learner-centred approach.

As each statement was measured on a 4 point Likert scale, the means which reached above 3.0 would indicate a generally positive view and if the means went above 3.5, it would indicate a very strong positive view. Similarly, if the means fell below 2.0, it would indicate a generally negative view and if they were below 1.5, it would indicate a strongly negative attitude towards the statement. Table 5.7 presents the results in a descending order based on the means with the question numbers attached for reference to the questionnaire (see Appendix 8).

In order to get a clearer picture of the views expressed by these teachers, the four-scaled answers (strongly agree, agree, not quite agree, disagree) are also grouped into two general tendency groups with one grouped into 'agree' and the other 'disagree'. In other words, responses scaled 3 and 4 indicating 'agree' and 'strongly agree' are recoded in the same category of 'Agree' and similarly, responses scaled 2 and 1 indicating 'not quite agree' and 'disagree' are recoded into 'Disagree'. The reason for re-grouping the responses in this way is that Chinese tend to avoid extremes and contradictions (Nisbett, 2003). They often express their opinions in a more moderate way unless they believe that something is logically false. Therefore, 'strongly agree' will very likely end up with 'agree' while 'not quite agree' is sometimes more acceptable than a straightforward 'disagree'. The results are also presented in Table 5.7.

As we can see from Table 5.7, nine statements enjoyed overwhelming agreement showing either positive or very positive views from the respondents:

- A relaxed, harmonious and democratic environment is good for learning (mean=3.7; 97.0% agree);
- Children are different and they should all be treated with respect (mean=3.7; 96.6% agree);

- Teachers should try as much as possible to understand every child's needs, interests, capacity and aptitudes (mean=3.6; 96.8% agree);
- Teachers should create opportunities for children to express their own ideas (mean=3.6; 96.4% agree);
- The best way for children to learn is through enjoyable activities (mean=3.6; 96.1% agree);
- Engaging children with interest and attention is far more important than mechanical learning (mean=3.4; 91% agree);
- It helps with learning if children are engaged in pair/group work (mean=3.4; 83.9% agree);
- Building new knowledge on old knowledge helps with learning (3.4; 92.7% agree);
- It is important to give children the opportunity to choose their own ways of learning (mean=3.1; 83.9% agree).

Seven statements which had means lower than 2.0 showed consensus of negative views by a majority of the respondents. They include:

- To learn a language is to learn its grammar and vocabulary (mean=1.8; 82.4% disagree);
- Copying words helps memorisation (mean=1.8; 81% disagree);
- Publicizing test results can facilitate learning (mean=1.8; 79.8% disagree);
- Children are too young to be involved in self-assessment (mean=1.7; 87.2% disagree);
- It is very important to explain grammar rules to children (mean= 1.6; 91% disagree);
- Children learn in similar ways (mean=1.6; 82.9% disagree);
- The best way for assessing learning is through exams (mean=1.6; 91.9% disagree);

Table 5.7 Teachers' beliefs on teaching and learning English in the primary school

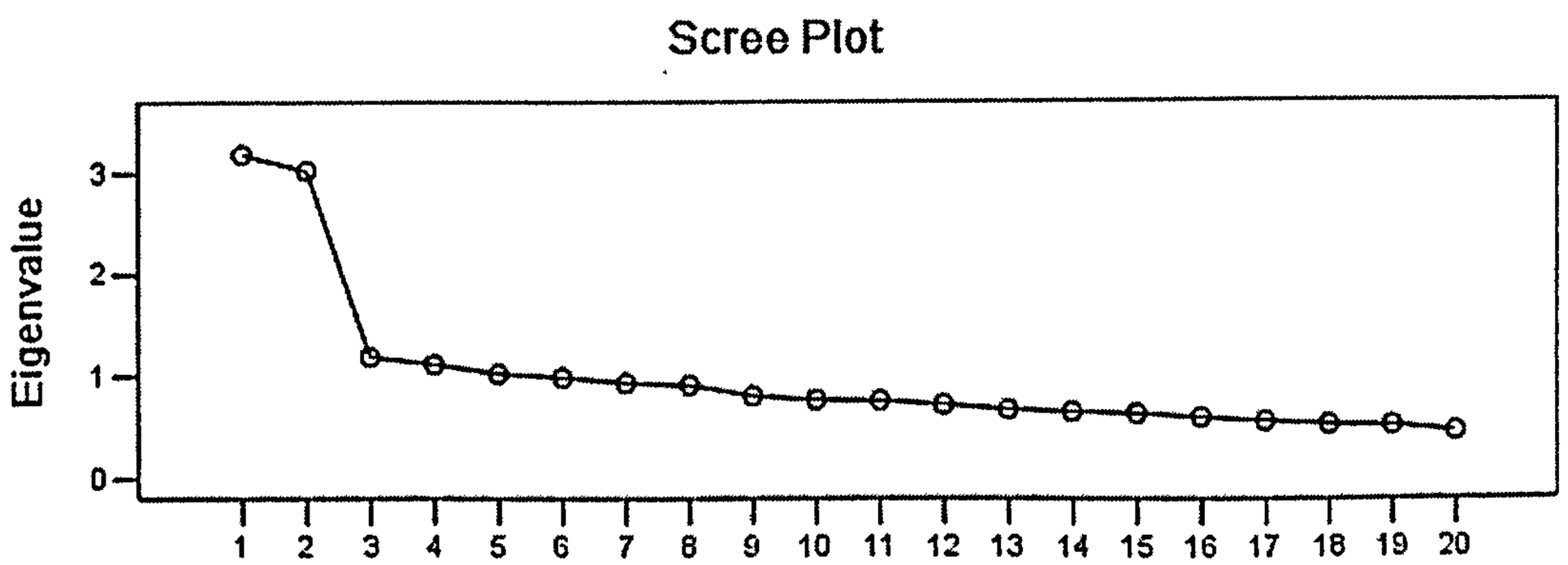
Beliefs	Total	Means	SD	Agree %	Disagree %	No choice
5 Relaxed, harmonious and democratic environment is good for learning.	1000	3.7170	.53963	97.0	3.0	2
19Every child has his/her own characteristics. Teachers should treat every child with respect.	999	3.6507	.59983	96.6	3.2	3
11Teachers should create opportunities for children to express their own ideas and feelings.	999	3.6026	.60660	96.4	3.4	2
20 Teachers should try as much as possible to understand every child's need, interests, capacity and aptitudes.	999	3.5876	.62037	96.8	2.7	5
7 The best way for children to learn is through enjoyable activities and active participation.	997	3.5707	.61300	96.1	3.7	2
16Engaging children with interest and attention is far more important than mechanical learning.	998	3.4379	.74250	91.0	8.6	4
10 It helps with learning when children are engaged in pair/group work to communicate/practice with the lg.	1000	3.4270	.58567	96.4	3.5	1
2 Building new knowledge on old knowledge helps with learning.	999	3.3904	.71187	92.7	6.8	5
9 It is important to give children the opportunity to choose their own ways of learning	999	3.0501	.74606	83.9	14.8	13
15 For effective teaching, good discipline is necessary.	1000	2.9440	.84828	73.3	26.3	4
1. The main goal for teaching English is to teach the basics.	999	2.8048	.94802	65.4	34.3	3
8 Children have the ability to be involved in setting-up their own goals and making their own plans.	997	2.4183	.88868	47.6	51.2	12
4 The best way to learn a language is through imitation, repetition and memorisation.	996	2.3594	.94434	44.9	54.5	6
18 I believe publicizing test results can facilitate learning.	999	1.8308	.79352	19.1	79.8	11
3. To learn a language is to learn its grammar and vocabulary.	997	1.8151	.75520	16.6	82.4	9
14 The best way to help children learn the language is to ask them to recite, repeat and copy the words many times.	999	1.7788	.80586	17.6	81.0	14
12 Children are too young to be involved in self-assessment.	1000	1.6750	1.81898	11.2	87.2	16
17The best way to assess learning is through exams.	996	1.6084	.66142	7.3	91.9	8
6 Not much difference exist among children. They learn in similar ways.	997	1.5878	.74452	10.1	89.2	7
13 It is very important to explain grammar rules to children.	995	1.5508	.70224	7.4	91.0	16

Despite the above overwhelming consensus on most of the statements, four statements which had means between 2.3-2.9 indicated an obvious division of

opinions (see Table 5.7 for the shaded items). Among the four statements, two stand out in particular showing most significant divergent opinions They are: 'The best way to learn a language is through imitation, repetition and memorisation' (44.9% agree and 54.5% disagree) and 'Children have the ability to be involved in setting-up their own goals and making their own plans' (47.6% agree and 51.2% disagree). The division of opinions on these two statements showed contrastive assumptions on how children think and learn. Two other statements which also showed certain degrees of different opinions were whether the main goal for teaching English was to teach the basics (65.4% agree and 34.3% disagree) and whether good discipline was necessary for effective teaching (73.3% agree and 26.3% disagree).

In order to confirm the proposed 20 dimensional constructs related to LC and TC beliefs which made up the scales in the questionnaire survey, factor analysis was carried out. Figure 5.7 gives the Scree Plot of all the 20 factors. It showed a steep slope after the first two factors followed by a gently leveled line with the rest. This helped to determine that two major components should be extracted. From the Rotated Factor Matrix shown in Figure 5.8, we can see clearly the item loadings for each variance which divides the two sets of factors.

Figure 5.7 Scree Plot of factors on teachers' general beliefs



As Figure 5.8 shows, the first factor is most highly associated with the following five variances: asking children to copy words many times to help them remember; explaining grammar rules to children; learning a language by learning its

vocabulary and grammar; learning by imitation and repetitions; and assessing learning by using exams. Four other variances which are moderately associated with the first factor include: publicizing test results; emphasizing the basics; lack of awareness of individual needs and the importance of disciplines. All the above mentioned nine variances are in one way or another associated with the conceptions of TC approach. On the other hand, the second factor is mostly associated with the conceptions of LC approach. The variances that are highly related to the second factor include: creating opportunities for children to express their own ideas; conducting pair/group work; nurturing a relaxed and democratic learning atmosphere; and satisfying the needs of different children using enjoyable activities. Four other variances which are moderately related with the second factor are: opportunities for children to choose; respecting each child; engaging children with interests; and involving children in setting up their own goals and making their own plans. The last variance, namely, building new knowledge on existing knowledge, which has a very close loading of values to both factors, 0.287 to factor one and 0.304 to factor two, is associated to a certain degree with both TC and LC beliefs.

The factor transformation Matrix in Figure 5.9 shows that factor one and factor two are moderately interrelated (±0.40). This shows that part of the variance of the first factor would also be part of the second. In other words, despite the fact that there are two distinct components in teachers' beliefs as confirmed by factor analysis, the two components of TC and LC share some common constructs.

Figure 5.8 Factor analysis on teachers' general beliefs

Rotated Factor Matrix-Teachers' Beliefs

	Factor	
	1	2
The best way to help children remember new words is to ask them to copy the words many times.	.636	-.068
It is very important to explain grammar rules to children.	.582	.027
To a language is to learn its grammar and vocabulary	.564	.055
The best way to learn a language is through imitations, repetitions and memorization.	.524	-.035
The best way to assess learning is through examinations.	.516	-.069
I believe publicizing test results can facilitate learning.	.470	-.139
The main goal is to teach the Basics.	.415	.136
No much difference exists among children. They learn in similar ways.	.389	-.052
For effective teaching, good discipline is necessary.	.319	.095
Children are too young to be involved in self-assessment.	.197	-.072
Teachers should create opportunities for children to express their own ideas and feelings.	-.025	.590
It helps with learning when chidlren are engaged in pair/groupwork and communicate/practice with the language.	.099	.564
Relaxed, harmomiou, and demoncratic environment is good for learning.	-.093	.539
Teachers should try as much as possible to understand every child's needs, interests, capacity and aptitude.	-.089	.511
The best way for children to learn is through enjoyable activities and active participation.	-.034	.507
It is important to give children the opportunity to choose their own ways of learning	.040	.472
Every child has his/her own characteristics, teachers should treat children equally well.	-.064	.423
Engaging children with interest and attention is far more important than mechanical learning	-.109	.397
Children have the ability to be involved in setting up their own goals and making their own plans.	.099	.329
Build new knowledge on old knowledge helps with learning	.287	.304

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring
Rotation Method. Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

Figure 5.9 Factor Transformation Matrix

Factor	1	2
1	.916	-.402
2	.402	.916

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation.

5.3.2 Views on the goals of primary English

To find out about the teachers' perceptions concerning the goals of primary English, the respondents were asked to choose from 18 statements, five most important goals and rank them in the order of importance from the most important to the least important. It is believed that by finding out what goals teachers consider the most important for teaching English in the primary school and in what order they rank those goals will reveal their perceptions on LAMP/LC. Data based on crude counts of votes shows that the five most mentioned goals are 'be able to communicate in the language' (739), 'like to continue learning English in middle schools'(695), 'have positive attitudes towards English' (654), 'be active in class work and pair/group work' (479), and 'be confident in performing in class'(427). However, the crude counts may not truly reflect the exact ranking order of the selected goals from 1000 teachers. For this purpose and to be more rigorous with the data collected, a more refined system for finding out the ranking order was adopted by assigning a numerical value score to each rank given, e.g. the goal ranked 1st is given a value of 5, the goal ranked 2nd is given a value of 4, and the goal ranked 3rd is given a value of 3, etc. That is to say, rank 1 (gold) = 5; rank 2 (silver) = 4; rank 3 (bronze) = 3; rank 4 (iron) = 2; rank 5 (lead) = 1. The formula works like this: all the first rank mentions times the value given equals the total score it gets for that rank. The final score is based on the calculation of the total scores of each goal from all the five ranks, which will lead to the eventual ranking order of the five most important goals in the order of importance. Table 5.8 below shows the teachers' ranking of the five goals chosen.

Table 5.8 Teachers' perceptions of the five most important goals for primary English

Goals for Primary English	Goal 1 x 5	Goal 2 x 4	Goal 3 x 3	Goal 4 x 2	Goal 5 x 1	Sum Total	Ranking
a. Like to continue in the middle schools	449/2245	121/484	32/96	16/32	36	2893	**2**
b. Have positive attitude towards English	337/1658	262/1048	60/180	25/50	11	2974	**1**
c. Can communicate in simple English	121/605	236/994	219/657	105/210	58	2524	**3**
d. Memorise many words	2/10	11/44	21/63	24/48	27	192	
e. Can do homework neatly	X	3/12	3/9	4/14	26	61	

f. Can get good exam results	2/10	4/16	9/27	14/28	61	142	
g. Know IPA	13/65	22/88	49/147	50/100	41	441	
h. Master basic grammar rules	1/5	19/76	24/72	24/48	60	261	
i. Can do self-assessment	9/45	30/120	72/216	98/196	100	677	
j. Can read with the help of dictionaries	7/35	40/160	69/207	112/224	89	715	
k. Can do simple planning	6/30	32/128	66/198	50/100	38	494	
l. Can cooperate with others	5/25	42/168	61/183	90/180	50	606	
m. Can recite texts and dialogues	x	1/4	9/27	9/18	89	138	
n. Attentive in class	3/15	3/12	3/9	9/18	17	71	
o. Active in pair/group work	17/105	96/386	150/450	133/266	77	1284	**4**
p. Can perform confidently with others	13/65	46/184	83/249	165/330	120	948	**5**
q. Be always disciplined	4/20	3/12	6/18	2/4	31	85	
r. Active thinker	5/25	23/92	58/174	58/116	42	449	
Total responses	994	994	994	991	937		
Missing	6	6	6	9	42		

As we can see from the above, the five most important goals chosen by the majority of the teachers are 'developing positive attitudes towards English'; 'like to continue learning English in the middle school'; 'can communicate in simple English'; 'be active in pair/group work'; and 'performing confidently with others'. Among these five goals, four of them (1, 2, 4, 5) are related to pupils' well-being, positive attitudes and good behaviours in learning, which are all affective goals and only one (the third goal) is strongly related to language competence. Obviously, most primary teachers value the affective goals in primary English, reflecting a clear belief that teaching English to children means much more than just teaching the language. However, the fact that 'being able to communicate in the language' is ranked 3rd among the five most important goals indicates an awareness that only making children happy in learning is not enough, developing competence constitutes an indispensable part in the goals for teaching and learning the language.

What is also worth noticing is that the next few goals chosen as important include 'can read with the help of dictionaries', 'can do self-assessment', 'can cooperate with others in learning', 'can do simple planning' and 'be active in

thinking'. Again, only one is related to language competence, all the others are either metacognitive or affective goals.

The substantially disfavoured goals are those related to the mechanic product of learning, such as 'doing homework neatly' (39), 'being attentive in class' (35), and 'being always disciplined' (46). However, by examining the data carefully, we find that there are still 175, 128, 108 and 90 teachers who have chosen 'knowing International Phonetic Alphabet', 'mastering grammar rules', 'can recite the text and dialogues in the textbooks' and 'getting good exam results' as one of the five most important goals for their teaching respectively. It can be predicted that these teachers will stress strongly learning through memorisation and teach for the purpose of enabling children to get good exams results.

5.3.3 Perceptions of teacher's roles in the classroom

In this question, a list of 17 roles was provided and the respondents were asked to tick in the first column those that they thought a teacher should play and in the second column the roles that they believed they played well. The roles specified in the questionnaire are both factual and metaphoric roles. For example, 'knowledge provider', 'organiser', 'assessor', etc. are factual roles, while 'army commander', 'singer', 'parents', etc. are metaphoric roles. The respondents were also encouraged to add more roles if they wish. From Table 5.9 we can see that five roles were identified by over 70 per cent of the respondents as roles they should play, namely, 'organiser'(83%), 'learning companion' (81.4%), 'guide' (78.4%), 'knowledge provider'(73.6.4%), and 'participant' (71.1%) in the order of frequency of mentions. Among them, three roles are commonly related to LC - 'guide', 'learning companion', and 'participant', while two are commonly related to TC - 'knowledge provider' and 'organiser'. It seems that most teachers believed that they should play both learner-centred and teacher-centred roles. For these teachers, the two kinds of roles are not necessarily contradictory to each other. Instead, they can be integrated to fulfil different tasks or achieve different objectives in classroom teaching. There were also a few more roles that were selected by more than half of the respondents. They were

helper/consultant (64.8%), resource provider (56.6%), demonstrator (56%), of which the former two were associated more with LC and the latter with TC. What is interesting is that, role model (46.4%), assessor (45.5%), and actor (41%) also enjoyed quite a lot of votes. It is easy to understand why role model was chosen by so many teachers as the Chinese culture emphasises strongly that teachers should be role models for children in schools as well as in society. The roles of an actor and a singer indicated typical ways of working with children as singing and acting are enjoyable activities for children. Discipline controller (24.2%) and army commander (14.2%) were also believed to be important roles teacher should play by a smaller number of teachers. These indicated that being in control and keeping good order were particularly important for these primary teachers.

Compared with the roles they believed they should play, a much lower percentage of choices resulted regarding the roles they thought they played well (See Table 5.9). However, the five roles that enjoyed the most votes are consistent with the roles they believed they should play. Nevertheless, the order of frequency of mentions changed. They are 'knowledge provider' (64.6%), 'learning companion' (58.8%), 'organiser' (57.3%), 'participant' (53.1%), and 'guide' (49.3%) in the order of frequency of mentions. As regarding the rest of the roles listed, 206 teachers believed they played well the role of an actor, 130 played well the role of a discipline controller, 61 played well the role of an 'army commander' and 98 played well the role of a 'singer'. It is surprising that only 263 teachers believed that they played the role of a role model well compared with 458 who thought that a teacher should play such a role.

It is interesting to note that, on the one hand, these teachers' beliefs about their roles as guides, learning companions and participants seemed to be very much in line with the notions of LAMP/LC; on the other hand, they strongly safeguarded their roles as a knowledge provider and organiser in the classroom, which are known to be teacher-centred roles. For these primary EFL teachers, the solution to mediate

LAMP/LC is not to cast or change the traditional roles but simply to add new roles that are required.

Table 5.9 Comparison of the roles that one should play with roles one played well

Category label	Roles that one should play		Roles that one played well	
	N. of cases	%	N. of cases	%
1. Knowledge provider	727	73.6	634	64.6
2. Army commander	140	14.2	61	6.2
3. Parents	232	23.5	90	9.2
4. Guide	775	78.4	484	49.3
5. Gardener	337	34.1	127	12.9
6. Actor	405	41.0	206	21.0
7. Organiser	820	83.0	563	57.3
8. Singer	149	19.6	98	10.0
9. Role model	458	46.4	263	26.8
10 Demonstrator	553	56.0	384	39.1
11 Manager	384	38.9	173	17.6
12 Assessor	450	45.5	266	27.1
13 Discipline controller	239	24.2	130	13.2
14 Helper/Consultant	640	64.8	397	40.4
15 Resource provider	559	56.6	269	27.4
16 Learning companion	804	81.4	577	58.8
17 Participant	702	71.1	521	53.1

5.3.4 Perceptions of good pupils

Teachers' views on what characterises good pupils are quite crucial as such views can directly influence a teacher' approach to teaching and his/her attitudes towards pupils. We can see from Table 5.10 that three characteristics were identified by over 60% of the respondents as characteristics of good pupils. They are 'active in pair/group work' (88.2%), 'active in thinking' (74.6%) and 'interested in new things' (67.7%). A few others that were voted for by more than 400 respondents are 'knowing how to learn independently' (Total 438), 'full of imaginations' (Total 420) and 'active in answering questions' (Total 407). Most respondents seemed to favour a more humanistic view towards children and cared more for children's overall development, including cognitive, social and affective developments. It is also worth noting that though 'do what the teacher says' (2.1%), 'finish homework on time' (8.8%) and 'be good at doing exams'(8.8%) were chosen by very few respondents, quite a number listed 'have good pronunciation and intonation'(29.2%), 'answer questions loudly' (14.5%), and 'be good at discipline' (14.8%) as important

characteristics of good pupils (see Table 5.10), reflecting variety of opinions among the respondents.

Table 5.10 Three main characteristics of good pupils

		Count	Table %
Good pupils	do what teacher says	21	2.1
	finish homework on time	98	9.8
	answer questions loudly	145	14.5
	always do well in exams	88	8.8
	active in group/pair work	879	88.2
	active in answering questions	406	40.7
	have good pronun. and intonation	291	29.2
	interested in new things	675	67.7
	raise interesting questions	258	25.9
	active in thinking	744	74.6
	full of imagination	420	42.1
	good at discipline	148	14.8
	good at planning learning	266	26.7
	know how to learn independently	438	43.9
	talented in sth	82	8.2
	other	18	1.8
Total		997	100.0

5.3.5 Perceptions of 'learning'

Table 5.11 below shows the teachers' views on what 'learning' means to them, i.e. whether it means receiving knowledge, remembering knowledge, constructing meaning through experience, or developing learning strategies, etc. Altogether eleven statements were given and the respondents were asked to choose three that they believed could best represent the meaning of 'learning'. An overwhelming consensus was found in three among the nine selected. They were 'to acquire learning strategies' (91.2%), 'to construct meaning based on experience' (81.5%), and 'to develop positive attitudes towards the people, culture and society' (61.2%). At the same time, quite a number of the respondents (264, over 26%) selected 'to become knowledgeable' or 'to remember or receive knowledge' as their interpretation of 'learning', reflecting the traditional Chinese conception of learning which is to become a learned person by being knowledgeable..

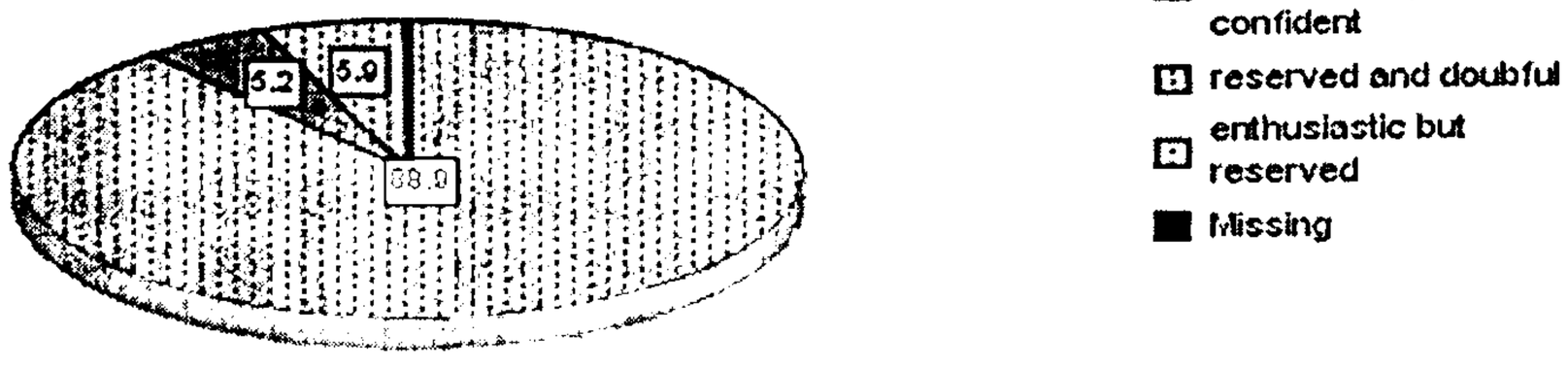
Table 5.11 What does LEARNING mean?

		Count	Table %
what is learning	to receive knowledge	75	7.5
	to remember knowledge	12	1.2
	to become knowledgable	177	17.7
	to construct meaning based on experience	814	81.5
	to find out truth with effort and with others	315	31.5
	to learn the textbooks in school	8	.8
	to get good test results	6	.6
	to acquire learning strategies	911	91.2
	to develop positive attitudes to other cultures	611	61.2
	other	25	2.5
Total		999	100.0

5.4 Attitudes and reactions towards LAMP/LC

When asked about their attitudes and reactions towards the ideology, 88.7% of the respondents said that they were supportive, enthusiastic, or confident. A small number of the teachers (5.9%) expressed a catch-22 feeling. That is, they were, on the one hand, enthusiastic about this new approach; on the other hand, they were not sure how it could work or how it could be successfully implemented, so they felt reserved and doubtful at the same time. Only 5.3% of the respondents expressed explicit doubts and reservations towards the new approach. The data showed that LAMP/LC as a notion or inspiration was welcomed by a large majority of Chinese primary EFL teachers (see Figure 5.10).

Figure 5.10 Teachers' first reactions towards LAMP/LC



5.5 Primary teachers' reported practices with regard to LAMP/LC

The third section of the questionnaire focused on what the respondents believed they actually did in the classroom. There were altogether 20 statements and the respondents were to decide on a 4-point Likert-scale whether each of the statements was very true, true, not quite true or not true of what they did in the classroom. Because what people say and what people do are not always the same (Deutscher, 1973), we cannot take for granted that the respondents say what they do or do what they say. However, with a large number of respondents, it is hoped that the data may lead to some insights into what teachers say they do in the classroom.

The twenty statements covered a wide range of teaching behaviours in the classroom. Some were associated more with TC and some more with LC. Table 5.12 below illustrates the findings in a descending order based on the means with question numbers attached for reference to the questionnaire (see Appendix 8).

With a 4-point Likert scale, a mean above 3 would indicate a generally positive answer to the statement while a mean below 2 would mean a negative answer. A mean between 2 and 2.9 would mean some divided behaviours reported by the participants. The 4-point Likert scale was again recoded into two categories of 'True of my teaching (choices 3 and 4) and 'Not true of my teaching' (choices 1 and 2). The results are also presented in Table 5.12. The following are what most of them reported that they did in the classroom:

- Do pair/group work with children (mean=3.4; 91.3% true);
- Pay special attention to foster children's interests in learning (mean=3.4; 93.3% true);
- Stress on good rules and try to keep good order during class time. (mean=3.3; 91.1% true);
- Always introduce the new content based on what pupils already know (mean=3.3; 92.5% true);
- Keen in creating a relaxed atmosphere for children to participate in activities (mean=3.2; 88.2% true);
- Never look down upon slow learners (mean=3.2; 86.7% true);
- Create opportunities and encourage children to express their own ideas, feelings or opinions (mean=3.2; 88.1% true);

- Act as a guide and helper in the classroom and give learning opportunities to children (mean=3.1; 81.4% true);
- Change ways of teaching to satisfy the needs of different children (mean=3.1; 82.8% true);
- Do a variety of activities which are suitable for primary school children (mean=3.0; 82% true);
- Do a lot of repetitions and imitations (mean=3.0; 77.2% true);

All the above statements of teaching behaviours are closely associated with LAMP/LC except the last one - asking children to do a lot of repetitions and imitations as repetitions and imitations are often considered belonging to the traditional approach, which are frequently observed in foreign language classrooms.

Table 5.12 Teachers' reported practices

What I do as a teacher	Total	Mean	SD	True %	Not True %	No choice
12 I pay special attention to foster pupils' interests and protect their self-esteem.	990	3.4030	.66715	93.3	6.4	3
2 I often organise pair/group work in class.	992	3.4012	.64346	93.1	6.9	0
18 I always introduce the new content based on what pupils already know.	989	3.3337	.62819	92.5	7.4	1
16 I stress on good discipline and try to keep good order during class time.	990	3.2636	.70831	91.1	8.5	4
17 I never look down upon slow learners.	990	3.2131	.71812	86.7	13.1	2
5 My classroom atmosphere is relaxed, democratic, and harmonious for children to participate in activities.	989	3.2093	.69241	88.2	11.6	2
19 I create opportunities and encourage children to express their own ideas, feelings or opinions.	988	3.2024	.70425	88.1	11.4	5
20 I pay attention to change my ways of teaching based on the needs of different children.	986	3.0548	.71463	82.8	16.6	6
14 In my class, I act as a guide and helper and my pupils do a lot language practice activities.	987	3.0527	.74228	81.4	18.3	3
4 I do a variety of activities which are suitable for primary pupils.	985	3.0284	.67264	82.0	17.8	2
1 I often ask my pupils to repeat after me or the tape-recorder.	986	2.9959	.76602	77.2	22.8	0
8 I often give my pupils opportunities to ask questions and to activate their thinking and imagination.	986	2.8742	. 80758	71.1	28.5	4
9 My teaching aim is to help learners to master basic knowledge and skills of the language.	986	2.5279	.84127	65.7	33.9	4
10 I often organise self-assessment activities.	987	2.5279	.86396	51.9	46.7	14
7 I give pupils opportunities to choose ways of learning and different types of homework.	989	2.4863	.94754	51.7	45.7	26
6 I often guide my pupils to do planning for learning.	991	2.0827	.96986	32.3	62.3	54

3 I try to explain grammar rules in detail when learning new grammatical items.	989	2.0212	.92596	28.5	68.9	26
13 I often use tests to assess my pupils' learning.	989	1.8726	.84769	19.8	77.8	24
11 In my class, I teach mainly by explaining vocabulary and structures with pupils doing some practice.	988	1.7854	. 84726	18.5	79	24
15 I often publicise the test results.	990	1.7455	.97276	22.4	72.3	52

The following three behaviours were reported by most teachers for not being carried out:

- Simply explain vocabulary and structures and then let children do practice in class (mean=1.8; 79% not true);
- Often use tests to assess children's learning (mean=1.9; 77.8% not true);
- Often publicise the test results (mean=1.7; 72.3% not true).

However, divided teaching behaviours were found in the following with means between 2.0 to 2.9, which are shaded in Table 5.12 above:

- Ask children to make their own plans (mean=2.1; 32.3% true, 62.3% not true)
- Give children the opportunity to choose their own ways of learning (mean=2.5; 51.7% true, 45.7% not true);
- Organise self-assessment activities (2.5; 51.9% true, 46.7% not true);
- Emphasise the basics in teaching (mean=2.5; 65.7% true; 33.9% not true);
- Explain grammar rules in detail (mean=2.0; 28.5% true, 68.9% not true).

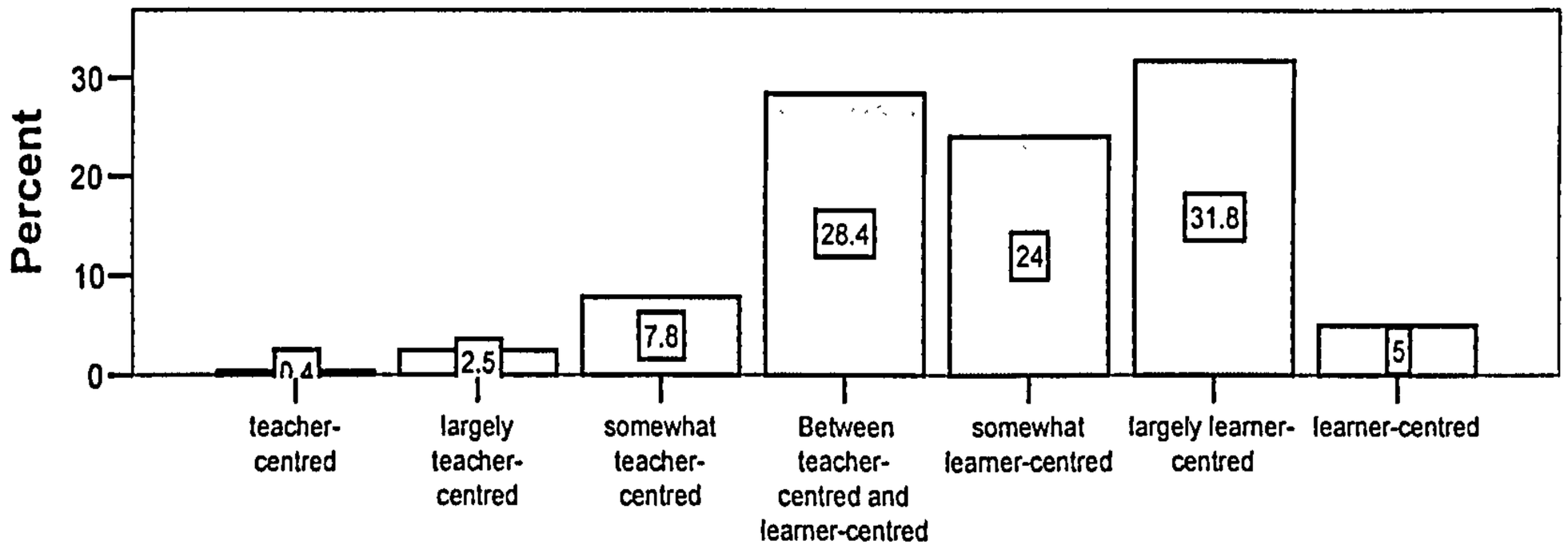
The findings regarding what teachers reported they did were found, in general, consistent with what they believed in. For example, corresponding to the beliefs that the aim for teaching the language was the basics (65.4%), we found a similar percentage of the teachers who also reported that they focused their teaching on the basics (65.7%). However, a few exceptions were found that showed certain degrees of discrepancies between what the teachers believed in and what they reported they did. Firstly, 83.9% believed that it was important to give children the opportunity to choose their own ways of learning, but only 45.7% of them reported that they had done so in the classroom. Secondly, 87.2% believed that children can be involved in self-assessment while only 46.7% of them reported that they had organised self-assessment activities in teaching. For involving children to make their own plans, 47.6% believed they should while only 32.3% reported that they had done so in the

classroom. It is worth noting that more than half of the teachers did not think that children could be involved in making their own plans for learning. As for explaining grammar rules to children, although only 9% of the teachers believed it to be very important, 28.5% of them reported that they had tried to explain grammar rules in detail when teaching new grammatical structures.

5.6 How teachers assess their own approach to teaching, LC or TC?

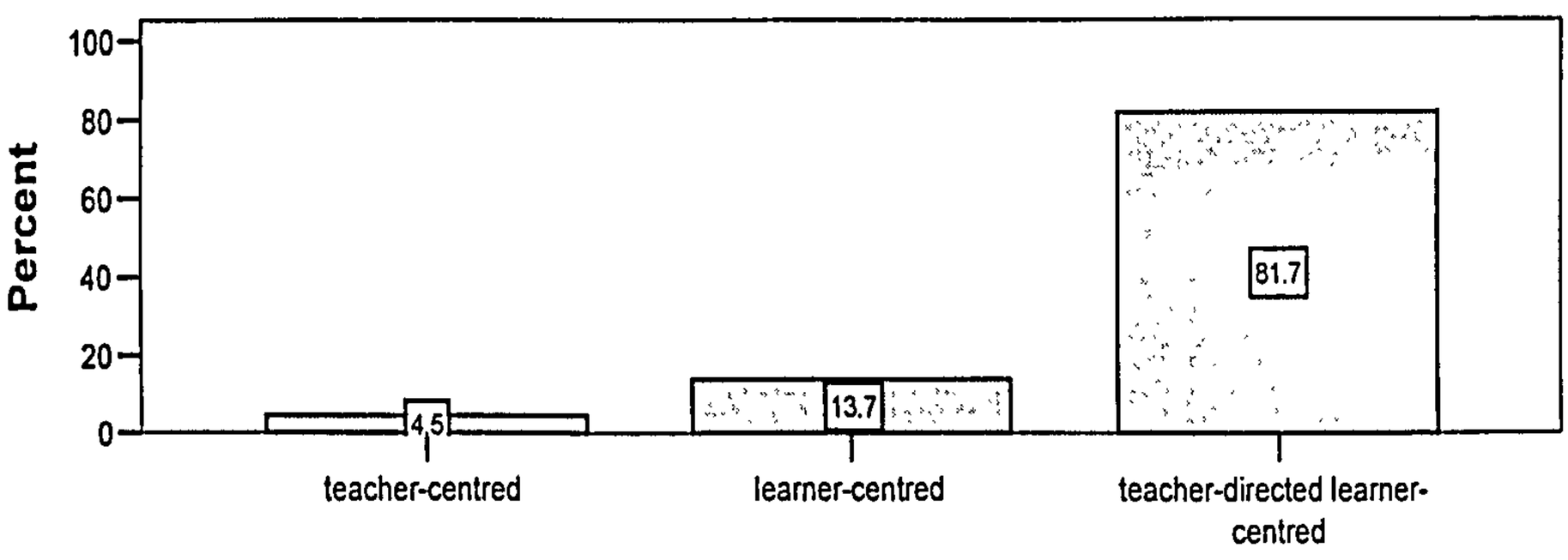
In the questionnaire, the teachers were also invited to assess their own approach to teaching. A continuum was given with TC at one end and LC at the other. Along the continuum, there were seven boxes which indicated from the left to right, teacher-centred, largely teacher-centred, somewhat teacher-centred, between teacher-centred and learner-centred, somewhat learner-centred, largely learner-centred, and finally learner-centred. The respondents were asked to tick a box which most represented their own approach to teaching. Out of 1000 questionnaires, there were 5 missing cases and the total was 995. Figure 5.11 below showed that only 4 out of 995 (0.4%) teachers reported that they were fully teacher-centred while at the other end, 50 teachers out of 995 (5%) reported that they were fully learner-centred. The rest all chose to be in between the two extremes. 28% claimed to be in-between teacher-centred and learner-centred, 24% somewhat learner-centred, and 32% largely learner-centred. Only a small number of them thought that they were somewhat teacher-centred (7.8%) or largely teacher-centred (2.5%). We can see from Figure 5.11 that their choices were clustered towards the more learner-centred end of the continuum rather than the teacher-centred end. It seems that most of these primary teachers' beliefs and reported practices were to a large extent, in line with the new curriculum.

Figure 5.11 Teachers' assessment of their own teaching approaches



A similar question was asked again to the respondents towards the end of the questionnaire regarding their teaching approaches. The question was designed in a slightly different way to see whether there were discrepancies in the answers given or any additional information added. In this question, only three choices were given: Teacher-centred, Learner-centred, or Teacher Directed Learner-centred (TDLC) and the respondents were given opportunities to explain why they chose that particular way of teaching. The result is shown in Figure 5.12.

Figure 5.12 How do I teach? TC, LC or TDLC?



As we can see, except for a relatively small number of teachers who identified themselves with either teacher-centred teaching (4.5%) or learner-centred teaching (13.7%), the overwhelming majority of the respondents, 81.7%, reported that they took the TDLC approach, indicating neither a completely teacher-centred nor learner-

centred approach but rather a blended approach. To understand what it meant to be teacher-directed learner-centred, we need to examine the comments/ explanations given by a large number of respondents which are presented in Section 5.7.

A further exploration into the data was carried out in order to find out if these teachers' choices of teaching approaches were affected by variables such as urban and rural schools, geographical locations of different provinces, and different ranges in age or years of teaching experiences. Multiple boxplot analyses showed that no major differences were found between rural and urban teachers in their choice of approaches (see Figure 5.13); no major differences were found among different provinces (see Figure 5.14); nor among different age groups (see Figure 5.15) as 99.4% of the teachers under survey were aged between 20 to 49 (Please refer back to Table 5.2), nor among teachers with different years of teaching experience (see Figure 5.16) as only 1% of the teachers under survey had more than 20 years of teaching experience (Please refer back to Figure 5.3). What is clear from the figures shown below is that the shaded boxes are all close to the top rather than to the bottom which indicated a positive skew of the data towards more LC approach with the median being at point 5 - somewhat learner-centred.

(Note: 1=Teacher-centred; 2=Largely Teacher-centred; 3=Somewhat teacher-centred; 4=Between teacher-centred and learner-centred; 5=Somewhat learner-centred; 6=Largely learner-centred; and 7=Learner-centred).

Figure 5.13 Approaches to teaching - urban and rural teachers

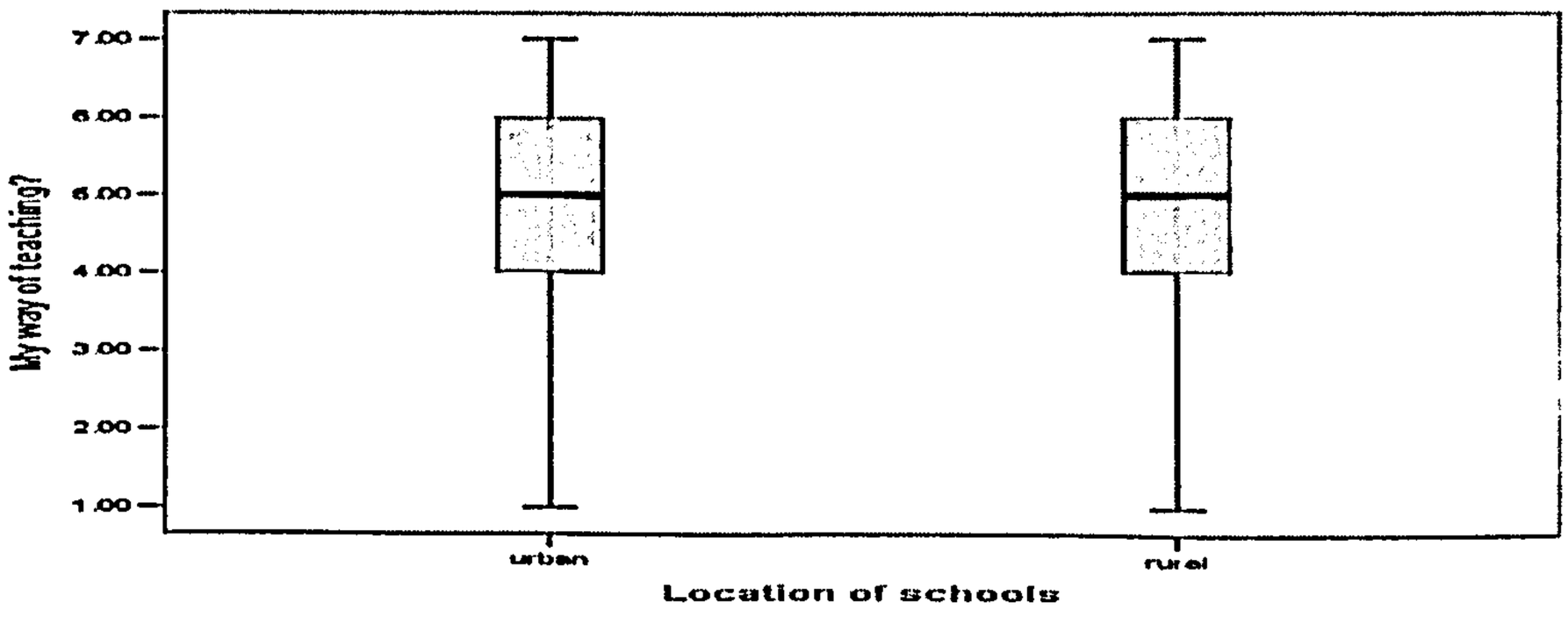


Figure 5.14 Approaches to teaching – different provinces

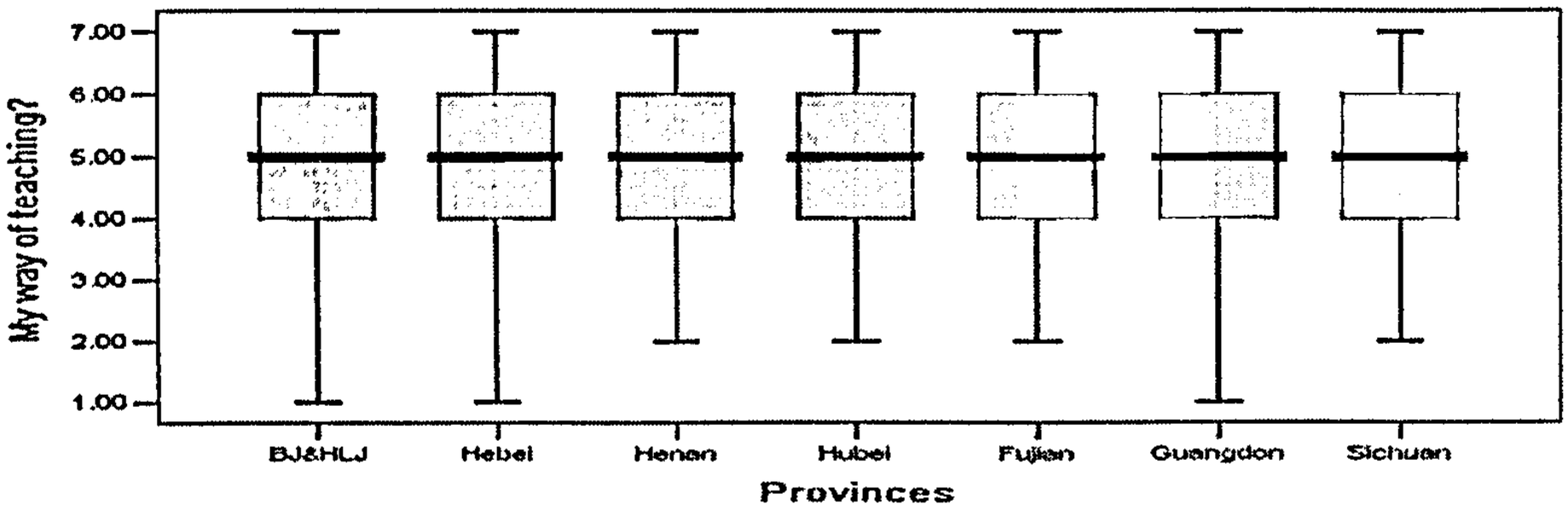


Figure 5.15 Approaches to teaching – different age groups

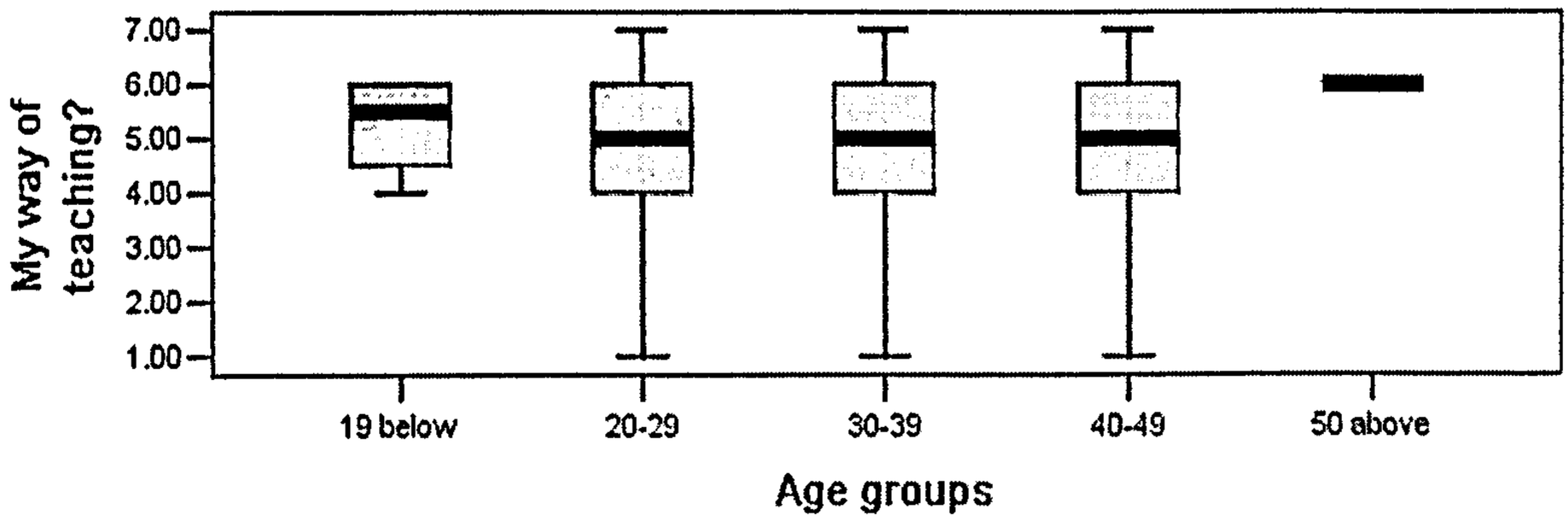
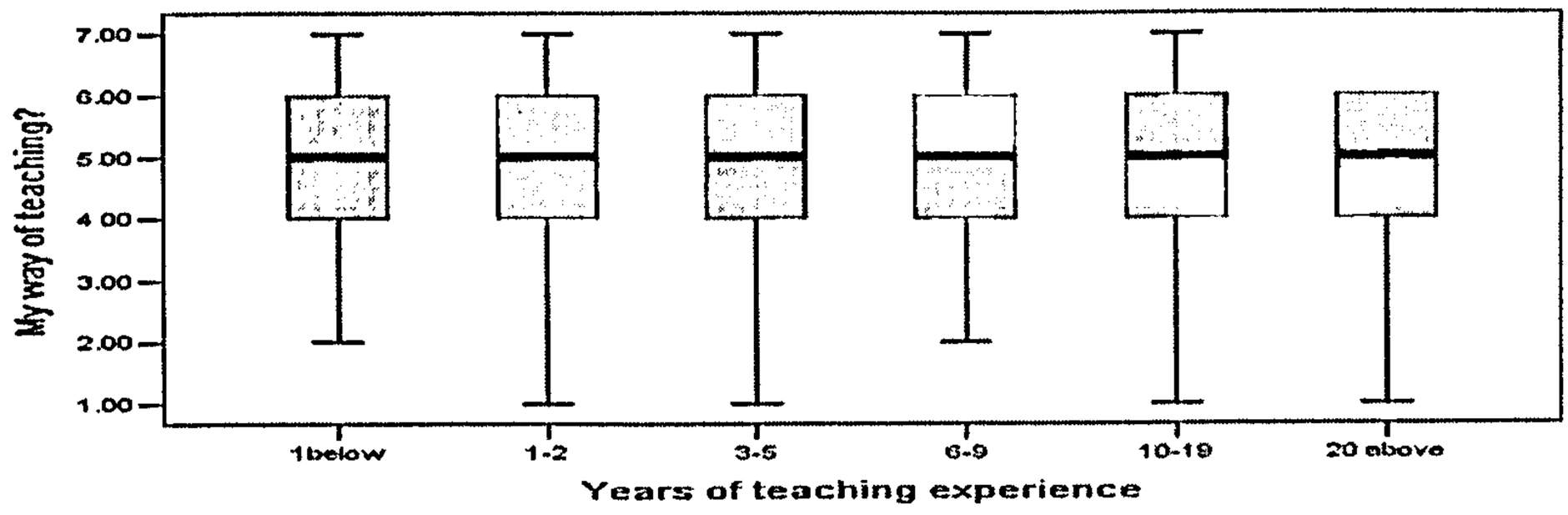


Figure 5.16 Approaches to teaching – different years of teaching experiences



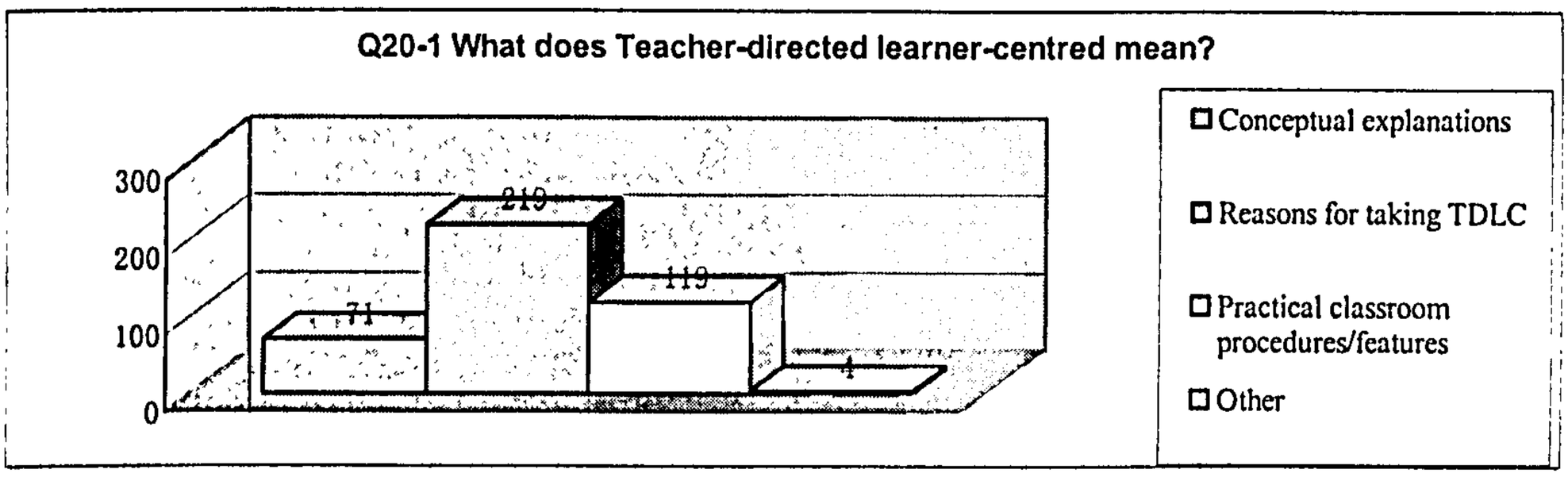
5.7 Explanations given for taking different approaches

Overall, 480 participants gave further explanation for the particular approach they took, either TC, LC, or TDLC. Among these participants, 413 volunteered their opinions for taking the TDLC approach; 46 for taking the learner-centred approach and 21 for taking the teacher-centred approach. (see Data Coding Sheet 1 in Appendix 13). The following presents in more detail explanations given first for taking the TDLC approach and then for TC and LC.

5.7.1. Explanation given for taking the TDLC approach

With regard to the explanations given for taking the TDLC approach, three broad themes emerged through content analysis: Theme 1 elaborated on the conceptual meaning of TDLC (Total 71). Theme 2 centred on the reasons or motivations for being teacher-directed in teaching (Total 219). Theme 3 focused on the detailed characteristics or procedures of a TDLC approach (Total 119), (See Figure 5.17 below and Data-coding sheet 2 in Appendix 13). It is interesting to note that under the same label of TDLC, participants expressed different assumptions and opinions and also emphasised different aspects of classroom practice. The following provides a detailed report of the findings based on the three themes.

Figure 5.17 What does TDLC mean?



5.7.1.1 Theme 1: Conceptual meaning of TDLC (71)

71 participants offered their conceptual understanding of the term TDLC. A majority (62 in total) explained it in quite a similar way, namely, by taking such an approach, teachers function as guides who lead, help, and organise learning while students function as main participants or masters of their own learning in the learning process, who learn actively and autonomously. The rest (113, 187, 342, 359, 375, 611, 629, 670, and 727) gave their explanation by using an analogy which sees the teacher as the director of a play and the students as actors and actresses. The director's task is to assist the actors and actresses in performing their roles by providing a stage for them to demonstrate their talents, capabilities or successes. In both explanations, there is obviously recognition of a major role played by the students and a supporting and guiding role played by the teacher in the process of

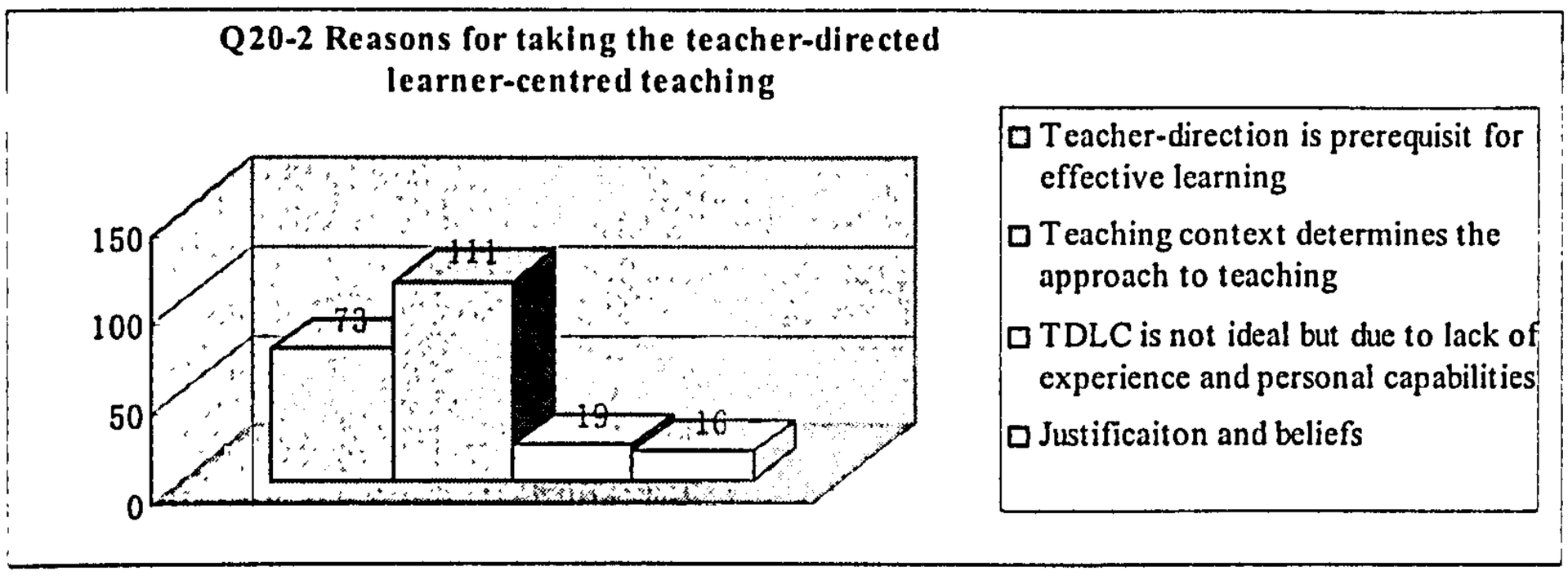
teaching and learning. Below are some examples of the participants' views with their questionnaire number specified:

- Students are the main participants and the teacher serves as a guide. (No.62, 516, 608, and 693)
- In my classroom, teaching is reciprocal between the teacher and the students. Students are the main participants and I am the guide. (No.335)
- I think a teacher is like a film director. The best director would let his/her actors/actresses use their talents and potentials by providing them with a big and spacious stage. (No.113)
- Teaching involves teaching and learning. The teacher is the guide and students are the main participants. Similarly, the teacher is the director and students are the actors and actresses. (No.359)
- The teacher functions as a guide who is an organiser and manager as well as a knowledge provider. Teaching should stress both the teacher's role as a guide and the students' role as the main participants. They benefit from each other. (No.726)
- Students must be guided by the teacher and can only gradually learn to play a major role in learning. (No.779)

5.7.1.2 Theme 2: Reasons for taking the TDLC approach (Total 219)

219 participants gave various reasons for taking the TDLC approach, which could be grouped into four kinds of views (see Figure 5.18 for a summary). The first view believed that TDLC was a better approach than LC to achieve effective teaching and learning. The second view believed that taking the TDLC approach was determined by the teaching context and various constraints were identified. The third view admitted that TDLC was not an ideal choice but teachers' personal capabilities limited them to this approach although they had an intention to be more learned-centred. The last view provided philosophical justifications. A closer examination of all these views is given below.

Figure 5.18 Reasons for taking the TDLC approach



View 1: TDLC is the best approach for effective teaching and learning (Total 73)

73 participants regarded TDLC as the best approach for effective learning. They believed that teaching needed clear objectives, carefully designed activities and well-planned procedures in order to achieve effectiveness. Without the teacher's guidance, students would lose their direction of learning and classroom would be in chaos with students like 'a sheet of loose sands' (No.220, No.307, No.311), lost in their directions of learning. With the TDLC approach, the teacher would function like 'a compass, who steers the direction of learning and ensures that students are all on the right track of learning' (No.45). The following are some arguments written by the participants defending their TDLC position as opposed to the LC approach, arguing for the important role teachers play in guiding learning and stressing the reciprocal relationship between teaching and learning.

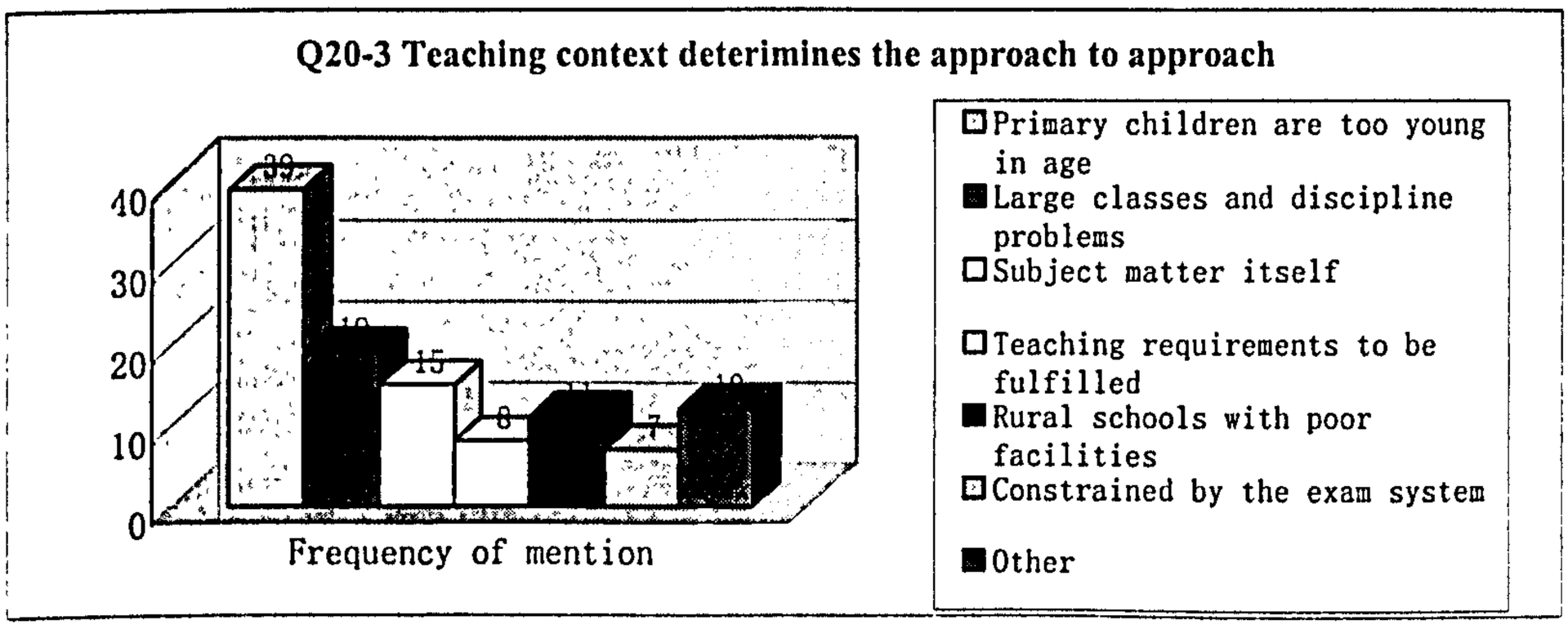
- A class without the teacher's guidance is like a flock of sheep without a shepherd. (No.148)
- If completely learner-centred, the class will get out of control. Teaching requirements will not be fulfilled. (No.348)
- Teaching is reciprocal. The teacher must be the organiser who guides students in learning. Only in this way, teaching can meet the needs of children and accomplish the teaching targets and requirements. (No.149)
- Only through teacher-directed learner-centred teaching can students have the opportunity to demonstrate their talents and capabilities and can their interests and motivation in learning be activated. (No.239)
- Being utterly teacher-centred, students will not be interested; but being utterly learner-centred, students will be like a little boat drifting in a river without seeing a lighthouse. (No.305)

- Being utterly teacher-centred, it is more like watching a TV programme or an acrobatic show. But being utterly learner-centred, students will be like a sheet of loose sand. (No.307)
- A good lesson needs the collaborative efforts from both the teacher and the learners. If we simply follow LC approach, teaching objectives will not be accomplished. Therefore, teacher's direction is absolutely necessary. (No.251)
- According to children's cognitive and biological characteristics, teachers should be the monitor and guide of their learning. To a certain extent, children's failure in learning English most often results from the failure of the teacher's effective guidance. (No.257)
- As pupils encounter English as a foreign language for the first time, there's no way they could learn by themselves. They are not capable of learning it without a teacher. (No.782)

View 2: The teaching context determines the approach of teaching (111)

Many participants believed that the TDLC approach they chose to take were the results of constraints they faced in their teaching contexts. Six constraining factors were identified which included age, large classes, the subject of English as a foreign language, prescribed curriculum, school location in rural areas, and the exam system (see Figure 5.19 below).

Figure 5.19 The teaching context determines the approach to teaching



(1) Age (Total 39)

Among the six contextual constraints mentioned, age had the most votes. It was believed that this single factor determined the importance of teacher's direction because they believed that the young age implied a lack of solid basis of knowledge

and a low ability in self-regulation. As a result, the teacher's role as a knowledge provider and organiser are indispensable.

- Children's ability of self-control is limited. If letting go, teaching can only result in failure. (No.235)
- Primary pupils' autonomous learning ability is still very low. Therefore, teachers must organise and guide learning effectively so that pupils can benefit more through participating in class activities. (No.202)
- Psychologically and biologically, children are not mature yet. They cannot discover and learn new knowledge independently. They need the teachers' guidance and learn new things gradually. (No.240)
- Often, games and performances can arouse children's interests in learning, but they also make discipline difficult to control. As a teacher, I can only choose to take the teacher-directed learner-centred approach in teaching. (No.263)

(2) Large classes and the issue of discipline (Total 19)

'Large classes' is another major contextual factor which requires good control of discipline by the teacher to ensure order and effective learning. Many teachers under survey work with a class of 50 -60 children and some even over 70 to 90. For these teachers, maintaining order is often the first priority and a formidable task. 'Easy to let go but difficult to get it back' is the cry from quite a number of teachers. The control of discipline was seen contradictory to the implementation of LC.

- A learner-centred classroom will make discipline difficult to control for a large class. The teacher has to be the guide. (No.154)
- There are too many pupils in one class. To be learner-centred, I will not be able to cope with teaching. (No.188)
- Because there are too many pupils in one class, the teacher has to be an army commander. (No.384)
- The class is too big and the teaching load is too heavy. I dare not let go/let children do games. (No.285, No.647)

(3) Linguistic factors (Total 15)

The third contextual factor is the English language itself. As English is a foreign language as a school subject, children need to be taught the words, structures and expressions before they can use the language to express what they wish. A few

teachers expressed their reservations about simply letting children speak English as they thought children knew too little English to be able to speak up for real communication. They believed that it was the teacher's job to teach children how to pronounce words and children needed a lot of practice through repetition and memorisation. This means that the learning of English by primary children has to be teacher-directed.

- English is a foreign language. We have very little contact with it in our daily life. If teachers do not speak up, how can we expect pupils to open their mouth? It is necessary that pupils be the main participants but with English, the teacher has to be the director or guide for children's learning. (No.274)

- Grade three children have just started to learn the language. If we insist on learner-centredness, classroom will turn into a 'mother tongue' world. (No.666)

- I think English is a new language. If I ask pupils to read by themselves, they definitely will not know how to read it. Similarly, if I ask them to practice by themselves, they will not know how to practice. (No.22)

(4) Curriculum requirement (Total 8)

Teaching requirement is another contextual factor which requires teachers to fulfil goals within a specified teaching time. As all the teachers have to follow a prescribed curriculum and use a pre-determined textbook, they cannot do what they wish to do and they cannot let students choose what they want to learn either. They need to lead students to learn the required contents and make sure that they can master what is required of them.

- Teachers teach according to the textbooks they use. There are teaching objectives to fulfil in every lesson. Therefore, the teacher can only be learner-centred to a certain extent. That is why my teaching is more teacher-directed learner-centred. (No.197)

- Each week, I have to teach two lessons from the textbook and finish two units in the activity book. Also, I have to finish marking 360 copies of exercise books and what's more, there is the pressure of the exam results. (No.98)

- If we follow the learner-centred approach in teaching, that is to teach according to what pupils wish to learn, there is no way we can accomplish our teaching objectives. (No.363)

- The characteristics of primary pupils determine that teaching has to be teacher-directed. Otherwise, it will turn into a 'pot of porridge'. How can we fulfil teaching objectives and improve teaching effectiveness? (No.602)

(5) Location of schools (Total 11)

Teachers from rural schools stressed their children's disadvantages over urban children in their learning environment. They believed that children from rural families needed even stronger teacher-direction in learning because they were less open to the outside world and therefore were often reluctant to speak out and participate in class activities.

- Children from the countryside need more teacher guidance and organisation, because English is so unfamiliar to them and they do not have any knowledge at all. Therefore, the teacher has a very important role to play. (No.166)
- Because my pupils are all from the mountainous regions and countryside, their basic qualities are not as good as those children who are from the cities. (No.244)
- Children from the countryside have very poor foundation of knowledge. Without the teacher's guidance, they will not be able to learn well. (No.168)

(6) The exam system (Total 7)

Finally, some teachers believed that the exam system determined the way they taught. They stressed that they had to make sure that their children could do well in exams because they were assessed on their children's test results and they were often compared to other teachers by how well their children performed in exams.

- Because of mid-term and end-of-term examinations, I have to give children a lot of exercises to do and explain to them the grammar points. (No.65)
- Personally I do not think that teaching in a learner-centred way is difficult in primary English. But at the same time, we should consider the requirement of examinations. When it comes to exams, implementing learner-centred teaching is going to be difficult. (No.394)
- The current educational system tends to emphasise test results, aiming for passing rates. Primary school children have relatively low self-control ability and they need teachers' guidance for doing well in tests. (No.507)

experience or personal capability in either language or management skills, they had to follow the TDLC approach.

- I think both my English proficiency and teaching ability need to be improved. Because I do not have a solid foundation, I cannot do what I want to do in teaching...I am trying very hard now to improve myself. (No.215)
- Although I am very much for a learner-centred approach, I can only reach the level of TDLC due to lack of experience. (No.719)
- Honestly, I wanted to become learner-centred in a real sense, but I was always afraid of losing control of the class. As a result, I took the TDLC approach. (No.146)
- Although I'm willing to be learner-centred, sometimes discipline is a problem. It is easy to let go but difficult to get it back. (No.60)
- Because of my personal capability, I can not be completely learner-centred in my teaching. (No.467)
- My teaching ability and language level need further improvement in order to be more learner-centred. (No.468)
- It is not that I do not try the learner-centred approach but the problem is my pupils simply do not understand what is learned. As a result, I have to give them further explanation. (No.708)
- I think that primary English teaching should be learner-centred, but I have to admit that I'm quite perplexed as I have not been able to find an appropriate way to do it, although I have been searching very hard. (No.715)
- I simply cannot be sure to which 'degree' I can be learner-centred, so I cannot easily let go. (No.44)

As we can see from the above, quite a number of these teachers were in support of LC, but they felt that LC requires higher competence in both the language and pedagogy on the part of the teacher, which they felt they were lacking. They also expressed some uncertainties about the meaning of LC and how it could be implemented in practice.

View 4: Philosophical justifications for taking TDLC (Total 16)

16 participants justified their positions for taking TDLC which revealed their underlying philosophical thinking – a dialectic view. They believed that successful

teaching should strike a balance between LC and TC and such an effort should be constant and dynamically determined by the contexts where teaching takes place.

- Learner-centred activities should not be without order; they should be organised and purposeful. (No.80)
- We should not take to extremes in whatever we do. It is the same with teaching. Proper teacher guidance is necessary for a learner-centred classroom. (No.595)
- Teacher-direction is good for controlling teaching objectives while learner-centredness is good for activating pupils' motivation and interests in learning. (No.570)
- Classroom teaching consists of two major aspects (teaching and learning), neither aspect should be neglected. (No.360)
- The centre of learning should be adjusted constantly according to the types of learners, the time-table, the learning contents, as well as learner's effectiveness in learning. (No.27)
- The teacher must have the capability to manage the class. It should be managed like a prose – loose in form but not in spirit. Only in this way, can he/she achieve what he/she intends to do. (No.776)

5.7.1.3 Theme 3: Practical classroom procedures/features (Total 119)

Besides the conceptual explanations and various reasons given for taking the TDLC approach, a large group of teachers described the characteristics or typical classroom procedures. The following reports the characteristics or procedures described by over 119 teachers. It is interesting to see that these teachers described their teaching procedures in quite different ways which showed obviously different degrees of teacher-direction and thus different degrees of learner-centredness. For example, teacher-direction can mean all the following:

- T *explains* the main and difficult learning contents - the most essential points (No.17, No.591, No.621, No.680, No.697);
- T *presents or demonstrates* new knowledge and *gives help* to students (No.12, No.61, No.78, No.60, No.288, No.390, No.397, No.421, No.523, No.669, No.701, No.774, No.755);
- T *tells* students the new knowledge (No.590);
- T *designs and sets up* different tasks and activities based on what is taught (No.36, No.57, No.528); T *models* (No.12, No.532);
- T *provides* resources (No.73);

- T *elicits* new knowledge and then *provides* explanations (No.86);
- T *motivates* (No.228); T *organises* (No.283, No.597, No.663, No.775);
- T *guides, organises and encourages* (No.446, No.490, No.509);
- T *teaches* learning strategies (No.499); T *guides* (No.159, No.167, No.186, No.460, No.466, No.505, No.541, No.543, No.544, No.587, No.624, No.692);
- T *sets up* scenarios (No.729);
- T *monitors* (No.582, No.594);
- T *decides* on things to be learned (No.130);
- T *sets up* targets, *plan* lessons, *design* questions and procedures (No.587);
- T *build*s new knowledge on old knowledge (No.210, No.406, and No.740).

Under the teachers' direction, learner-centred activities differ from 'exercises' to 'problem-solving tasks'. The following illustrates some of the points made by the respondents: with the teacher's explanations, motivations, organisations and help, learners *work in groups*, *cooperate* in practice, *recreate* materials (No.12, No.523, No.755); *participate* in different kinds of activities (No.587, No.543, No.544, No.541, No.159, No.78, No.36, No.499, No.528, No.624,); *carry out* tasks and *interact* with each other (No.78); *do exercises* (No.73, No.25, No.621, No.590, No.591, No.680, No.697); *exercise, perform* creatively and *communicate* (No.729, No.288, No.206, No.563); *learn by analogy* (No.774); *use imagination* and *take part in discussions* (No.624); *express and present* themselves in full (No.446, No.490, No.509, No.549, No.663, No.692); *discover* rules/problems, *raise questions, and solve problems* (No.267, No.220); *learn* in activities and playful games (No.374); *memorise and practice* (No.25).

Despite the fact that interpretations of TDLC given by the participants vary a lot, the following views revealed some common concerns. First, there is a concern on teacher direction for children' learning; second, there is a clear emphasis on the gradual transferring of responsibilities from the teacher to the learners.

- The teacher gives simple explanations, demonstrations and modelling first, then, let learners do dialogues, activities, and tasks. During the activities, the teacher guides, leads and provides feedback. (No.78)
- Normally, after I finish explaining a new language point, learners will do creative performance under my guidance. (No.390)
- The teacher will teach the new knowledge and then guide learners in doing various kinds of language practice activities. (No.432)
- The teacher first models and then organises discussions after which he/she lets learners express themselves.(No.532)
- Teaching should combine teacher support with teacher letting go, which means teaching proceeds with support and then moves to half support then to letting go according to the difficulty level of the learning contents (No.282).
- The teacher motivates the pupils with various kinds of activities while controlling or monitoring teaching objectives and classroom discipline. (No.722)

5.7.2 Explanations given for taking the teacher-centred approach

Although only a small number of teachers (Total 45, 4.5%) claimed to be teacher-centred, it is interesting to take a look at the reasons underlying their decisions. A total of 21 teachers give further explanations for taking this approach. The following presents some of them:

- I often spend too much time presenting new knowledge and this leaves very little time for pupils' practice. Moreover, the forms of exercises are mechanical and boring.(No.15)
- Teaching is constrained by how teachers are assessed and the test results of the students at the end of the term. (No.33)
- I have no choice facing the type of pupils and the objectives specified by our local educational authorities. (No.109)
- I always feel that the knowledge is so unfamiliar to my pupils so I try to help them as much as I can, but as a result it has taken too much time in class. (No.90)
- I prefer that students' thinking follows the teacher's. (No.140)
- I am not so skilful in organizing classes and also I have to manage with the tests, so every lesson has its objectives to be accomplished. I dare not let go and try new ideas. All I can do is to add some new elements to the old teaching method. (No.478)

- Because I teach so many classes and they are all big classes, it is me who mainly talk, there is little pupil practice. (No.571)
- There is not enough teaching time for English and learner-centred activities often take a lot of time. I cannot fulfil teaching tasks if I am learner-centred.(No.637)

As we can see, except for one teacher (No.140) who is happy to be in the centre of teaching with her pupils following her thinking, most teachers do not seem to be contented with it themselves. In other words, it is not that they believe in TC but because they are either unable to cope with the teaching contexts such as large classes, pupils' low level of language competence, curriculum requirements, and assessment systems or unable to find a better way of teaching.

5.7.3 Explanations given for taking the learner-centred approach

46 out of 137 provided explanations for taking the LC approach, which are mainly descriptions of their ways of teaching stressing pupils' participation in activities, good classroom atmosphere, use of group and pair work, and care for pupils' interests and individual differences. For example:

- Pupils learn through experience, practice, participation, and cooperation to achieve the learning targets. (No.329)
- My pupils are very active in activities and the classroom atmosphere is very lively. (No.331)
- I try my best to give more chances for students to manage the activities themselves. (originally written in English) (No.404)
- Use a lot of pair and group work and organise self-assessment activities, trying to provide pupils with opportunities to ask questions. (No.441)
- I give maximum amount of time for pupils to practice the language.
- I take the pupils' interests as the point of departure and base my teaching according to learners' individual differences and I adjust my teaching methods accordingly. (No.769)

5.8 Teachers' assessment of themselves and their teaching context

According to Ajzen (1988), even when teachers hold favourable attitudes towards change and their school leaders approve that they perform the change, 'they are unlikely to form strong behavioural intentions to engage in it', if they have neither

resources nor opportunities to perform the intended behaviour (p.134). In other words, contextual factors can have a strong influence on what teachers can or cannot do. For this reason, a few questions were included in the questionnaire for the participants to self-assess their own linguistic capability, degrees of love for teaching, confidence in coping with change, as well as the degrees of support from their teaching context (e.g. how much support they can get from their school leaders, colleagues, parents, administrative system, etc. for implementing the LAMP approach. A 5-point Likert-scale instead of a 4-point one was used for this set of questions for the purpose of allowing more choices, particularly a mid-point choice instead of forcing teachers into a response of either 'good' or 'bad'. This is because these particular questions by their nature need to allow a mid-point, such as one's linguistic competence and love for teaching. Space was also provided to invite comments or explanations for the level of contextual support they think they have received for change. Data showed that 53% of the teachers felt that their English language ability was either good (46%) or very good (7%). About 41% went for average and 5% for relatively weak or weak (see Figure 5.20). In fact, the word 'average' in Chinese ('yiban') is often used as a mild or indirect way of saying 'not so good'. This seems to be in contrast with these teachers' self-reported love and devotion to teaching, as only 15% of the teachers reported that their love for teaching was average or lower while a large majority of the teachers (84.6%) reported that they either loved teaching a lot or very much. In other words, despite the fact that many of them may not necessarily possess a good level of English, they all love the teaching profession dearly (see Figure 5.20).

Figure 5.20 My English language ability

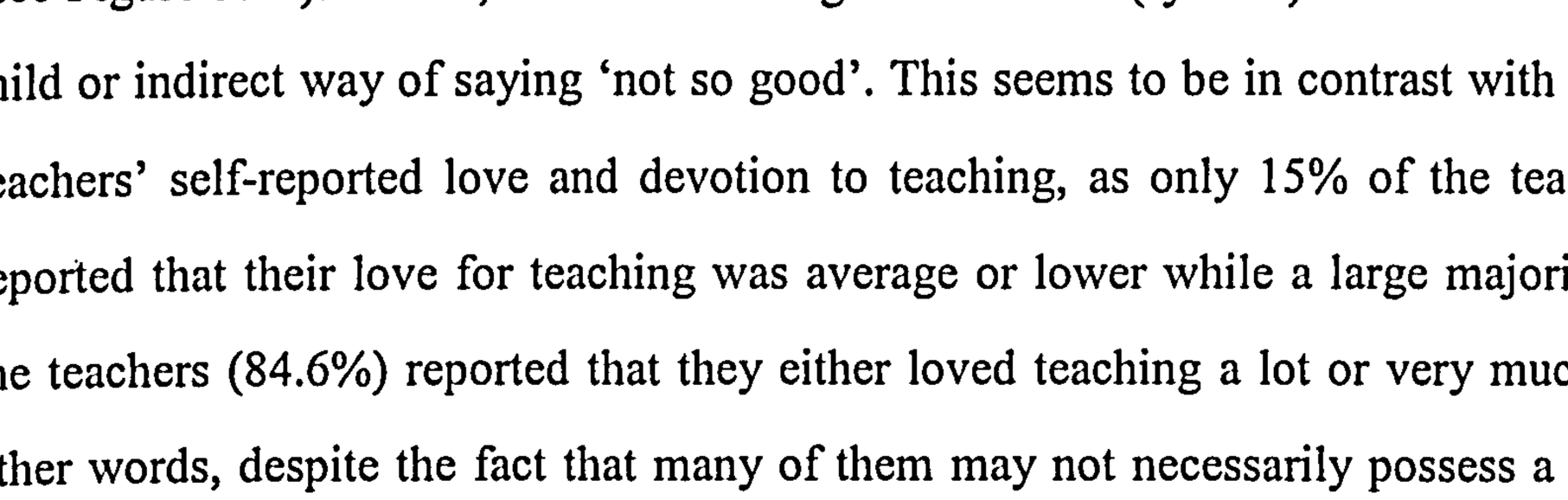
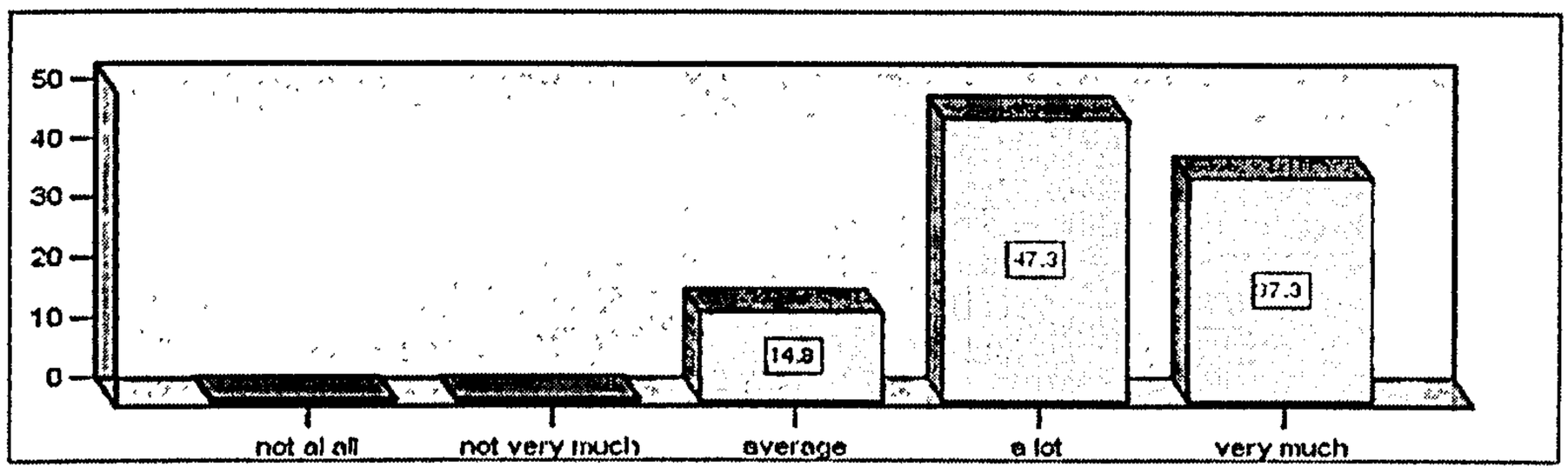
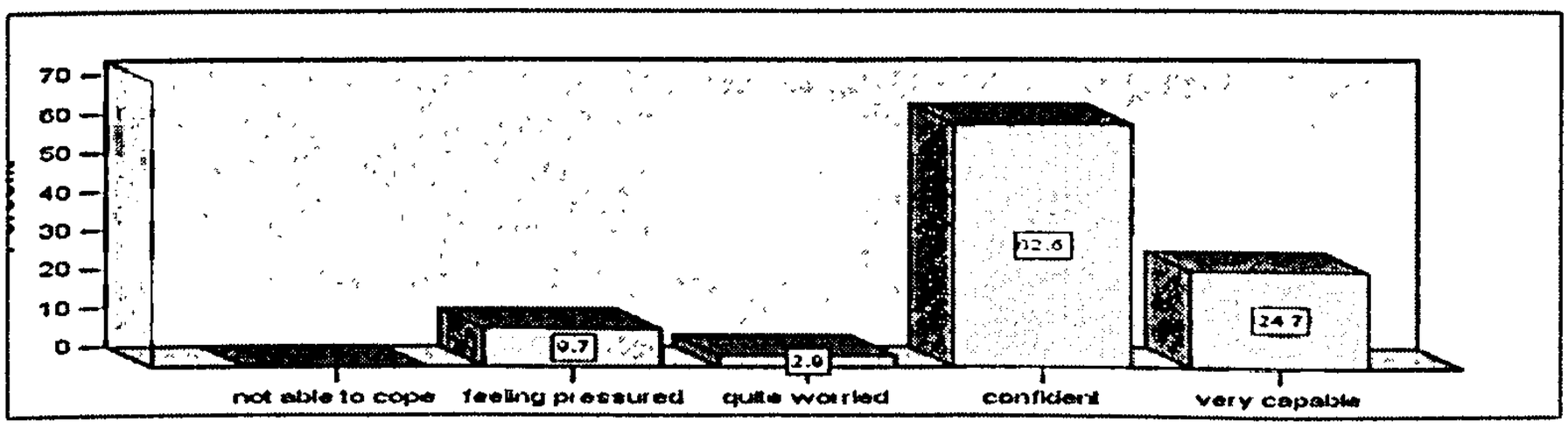


Figure 5.21 My love for teaching



At the same time, the participants were asked to assess their own ability to cope with the requirement of the new curriculum. Nearly 25% of them believed that they were very capable in coping with the new requirement and over 62% felt confident. Only less than 10% and 2.9% felt pressured or worried. We can see that although these teachers face various difficulties, they are in general very positive towards the new curriculum and are willing to adapt themselves to changes. One possible reason could be that this profession is composed of a generation of young teachers; therefore, they are more open to new ideas and more ready to meet with changes (see Figure 5.22).

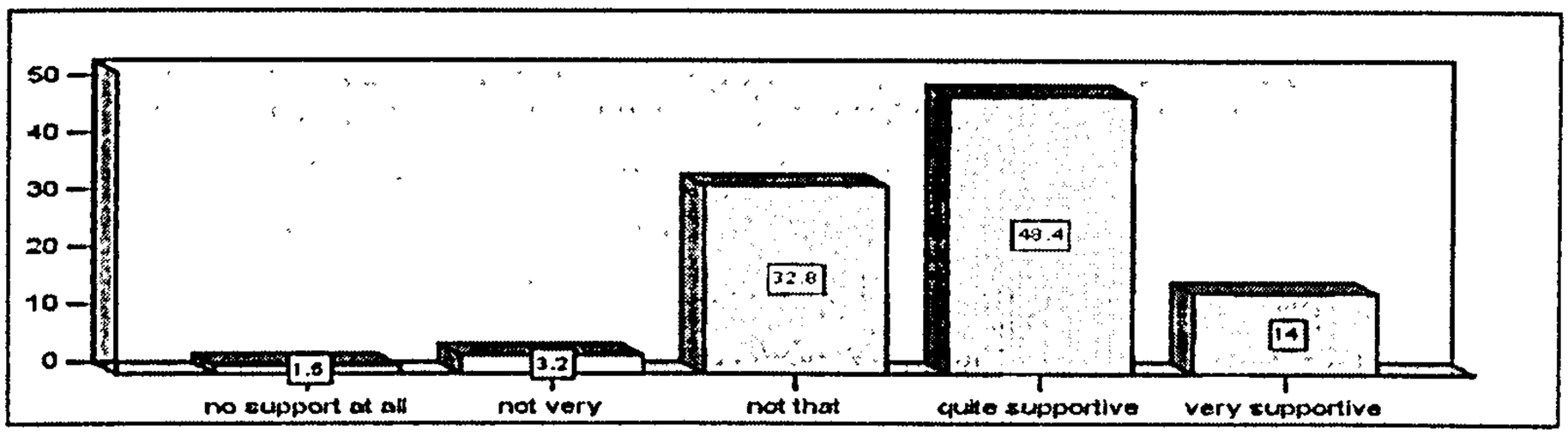
Figure 5.22 My ability to adapt to the new curriculum



Regarding how supportive schools are for them to take up the TDLC approach, out of 999 participants, 62.4% stated that their teaching situation was either very supportive (14%) or supportive (48.4%) for implementing the new curriculum, while 328 (32.8%) did not think their contexts were supportive enough. Only 4.7% claimed

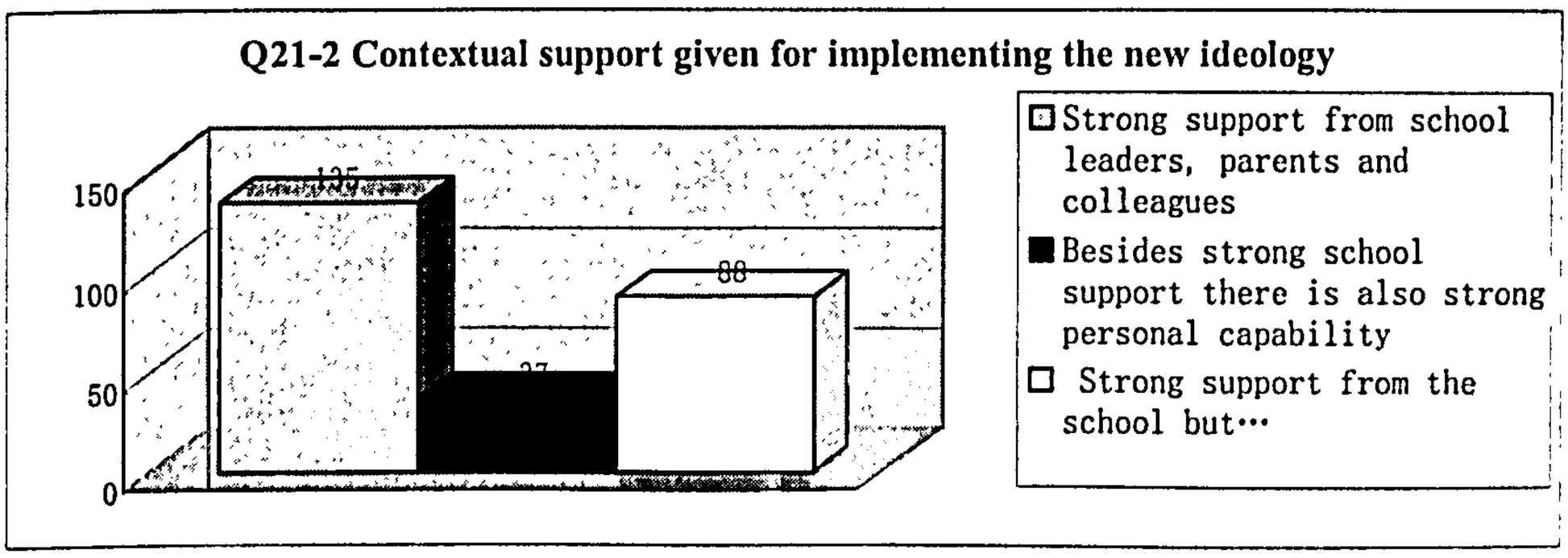
that their contexts were either not supportive (3.2%) or gave no support at all (1.5%) (see Figure 5.23).

Figure 5.23 How supportive is my teaching context?



Out of all these participants, 490 volunteered explanations for their assessment of the teaching context. The most mentioned supports were social or community recognition, school leaders' support, and parents' understanding (135 in total, see Figure 5.24 and Data Coding Sheet 3 in Appendix 13). Teachers' own confidence and capability were also mentioned as favourable factors for implementing the curriculum (37 in total). At the same time, 88 teachers made the point that despite the support they get, they still feel constrained by quite a number of factors.

Figure 5.24 Contextual supports given for implementing the new ideology



The following are some comments specifying the kind of support they received from schools and parents which included positive school atmosphere for curriculum reform, seminars on teaching and research held frequently, good opportunities for teachers to receive training, parents' support and understanding, good teaching

facilities provided. Small classes were mentioned by a few teachers as very favourable conditions for learner-centred teaching.

- The school in which I work gives special emphasis on the curriculum reform. It often organises seminars, lectures and open classes and we also discuss issues and exchange ideas together in subject groups. (No.163)
- My school leader and colleagues all study very hard the new concept of the curriculum and we disseminate the new ideas to parents and students and get support and understanding from the parents through parent meetings. (No.258)
- My school leader and colleagues provide me with the new ideology of the new curriculum during our teaching and research activities. We also discuss how to implement the ideas in classrooms. During the implementation, we reflect and summarise the progress we have made and the problems we are facing. (No.543)
- Our city often organises demonstration lessons on good practices, which can effectively promote the LAMP approach. (No.611)
- I teach smaller classes (40-45 students per class) and we have enough teaching hours (5 periods a week), which I think have provided good conditions for implementing the LAMP approach. (No.623)
- In our school we have young school leaders who are more adaptable to the new curriculum. (No.762)

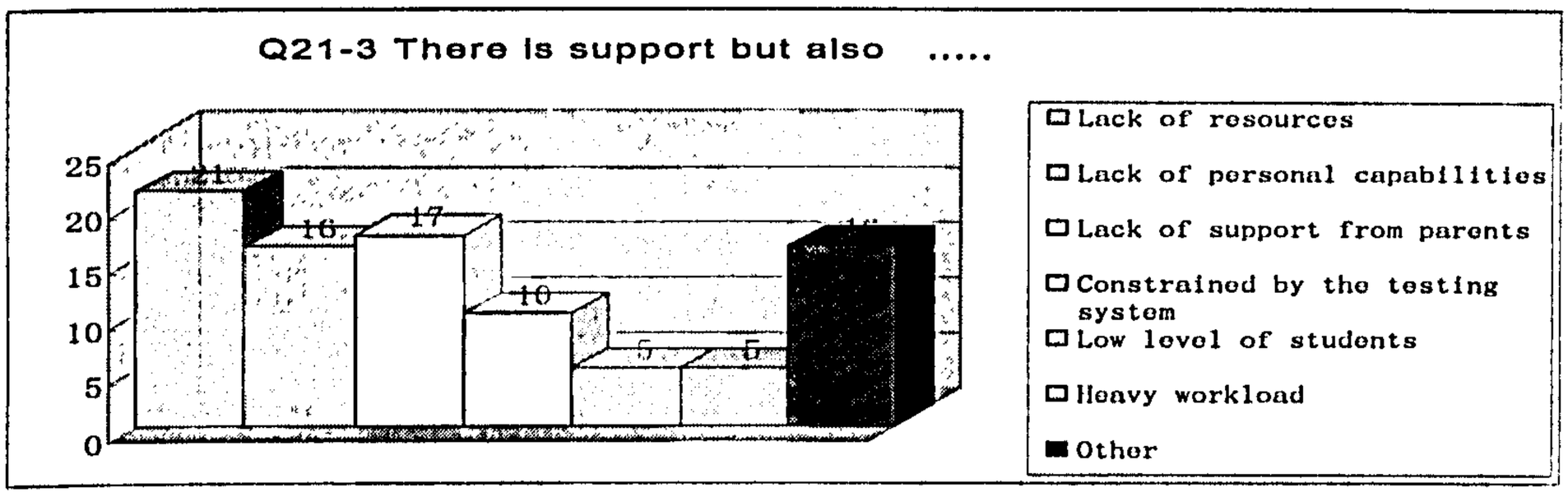
The second most mentioned supportive factor is the teachers' personal confidence, enthusiasm, devotion to teaching, as well as their sense of responsibility to improve teaching and learning for children.

- *I like English and love children.* (No.45) (originally in English)
- I love this holiest job under the sun and I support the new curriculum. I prefer the use of English to organise my class progressively and encourage my pupils to talk to each other and exchange ideas in English. In my school, everybody, including the wider community and the parents, as well as my colleagues, is extremely positive and enthusiastic about the new curriculum. (No.80)
- Environment is not static, it can be changed. As long as our students understand and can adapt to the changes, I am sure we will find a way. As long as we are creative in mind and active in body, we will succeed in what we want to do. (No.149)
- Because I have relatively extensive knowledge about child psychology and educational theories, plus the strong support given by my school leaders, I am very confident about myself in adapting to the new curriculum. (No.225)

- I am fully prepared for the challenges. (No.291)
- Teaching is the holiest and most beautiful profession under the sun. I believe, I try, I explore, I search and I am confident. (No.497)
- Our school is a new school and our textbook is also a new textbook, and I am a new teacher. I am confident about myself, my school and the new curriculum. (No.521)

Despite the supportive context teachers have acknowledged, 88 (12%) of them also spelt out some constraints that still hindered them from successfully implementing the new ideology. Altogether six constraints are mentioned with the first three attributed to the lack of resources, lack of personal capability, and lack of support from parents (see Figure 5.25). For a more detailed list of the constraints given by participants, see Appendix 14.

Figure 5.25 There is support but...



Other mentioned constraints include lack of teaching time for the subject matter (No.44), lack of training for teachers (No.48); lack of time and energy to innovate teaching (No.71); lack of emphasis on the subject matter as compared with Chinese and math (No.180, 201, 720); lack of language environment (No.183); lack of training (No. 261); lack of communication as there is only one English teacher in the school (No. 283); large classes and the problem of discipline (No.281); lack of efficiency in administration (No.70, 398, 532, 720), and lack of recognition of reform by the society and school in general (No.683). Finally, we have to realise that change takes time (No. 339, 429， 501, and 782).

Of the 375 (37.5%) teachers who did not think their conditions favourable for implementing the new curriculum (among which 4.7% reported that their schools gave little or no support at all), Lack of support and understanding from the school

leaders and parents, lack of resources, and ineffective school management/ administrative system were seen as the first three biggest obstacles for implementing the new curriculum. Other constraints mentioned were similar to the ones discussed earlier. A detailed list can be found in Appendix 15. Further analysis of the difficulties teachers identified is presented in Section 5.9.2.

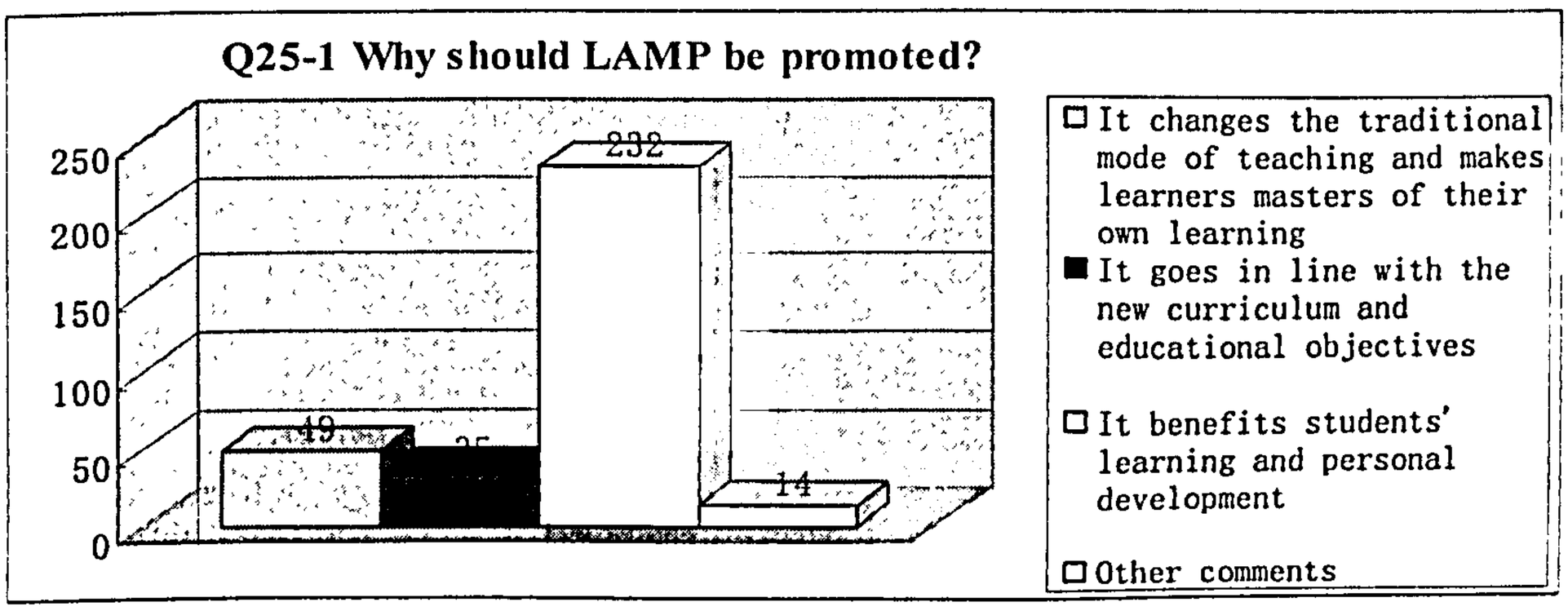
5.9 Benefits from and difficulties in implementing LAMP/LC

At the end of the questionnaire, teachers were asked to voice their opinions on both the benefits and difficulties regarding the implementation of the new curriculum. The following presents the results (see Data-coding sheet 5 in Appendix 13).

5.9.1 Benefits

In the last open questions, teachers were asked why they thought LAMP/LC should be implemented in primary English education. Figure 5.26 below shows the benefits identified by those who responded to the question. As we can see, a large majority of the teachers believed that students were the ones who would benefit the most from the new curriculum as this new approach would help develop students' interests and motivation in learning, build up their self-confidence, and develop their sense of responsibility for learning. Other benefits identified included changing the traditional spoon-feeding way of teaching so that students would become more active learners. Also it was believed that LAMP/LC was in line with the new curriculum and the overall educational objectives.

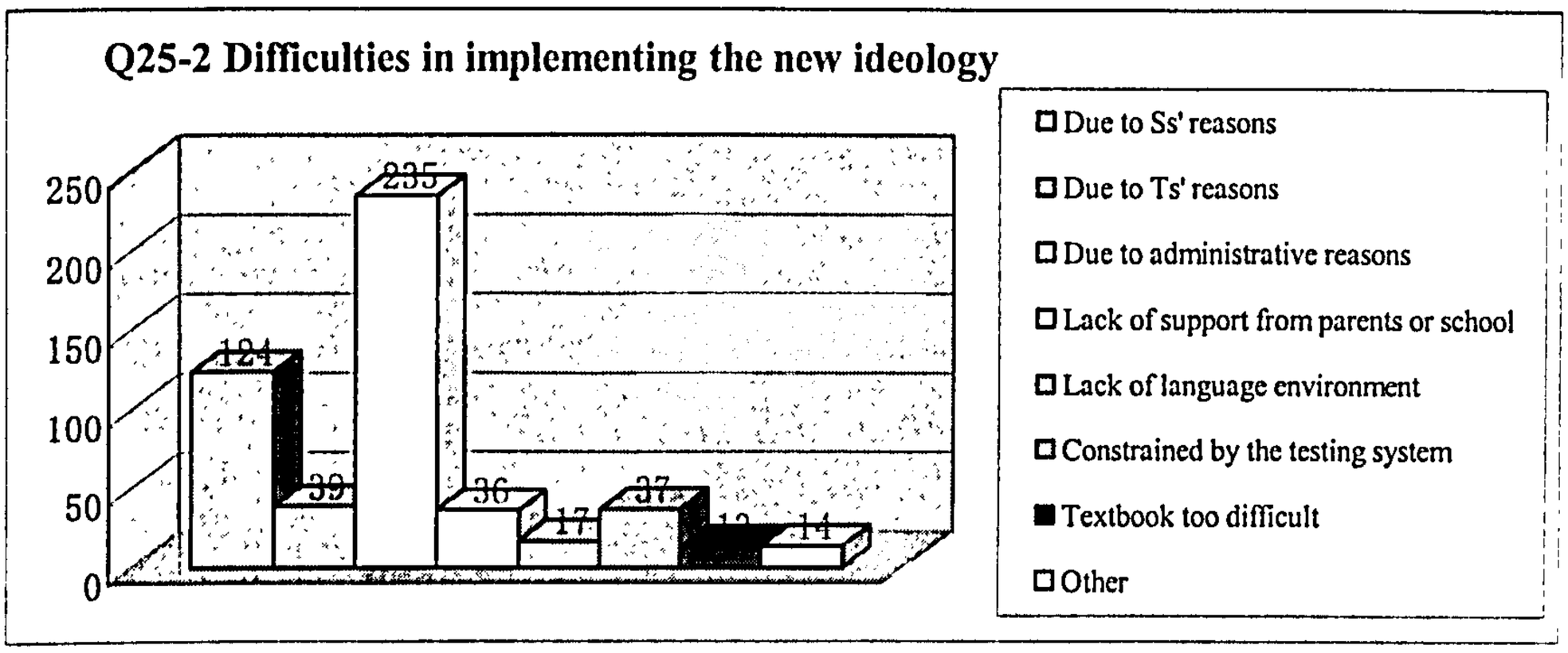
Figure 5.26 Benefits from implementing LAMP/LC



5.9.2 Difficulties

488 participants spelt out the difficulties in implementing the LAMP/LC approach, among which, 235 attributed them to administrative reasons, 124 to students, 39 to teachers, 37 to the current assessment system, 36 to lack of parental or school support, 17 to lack of language environment, and 13 to teaching materials (see Figure 5.27).

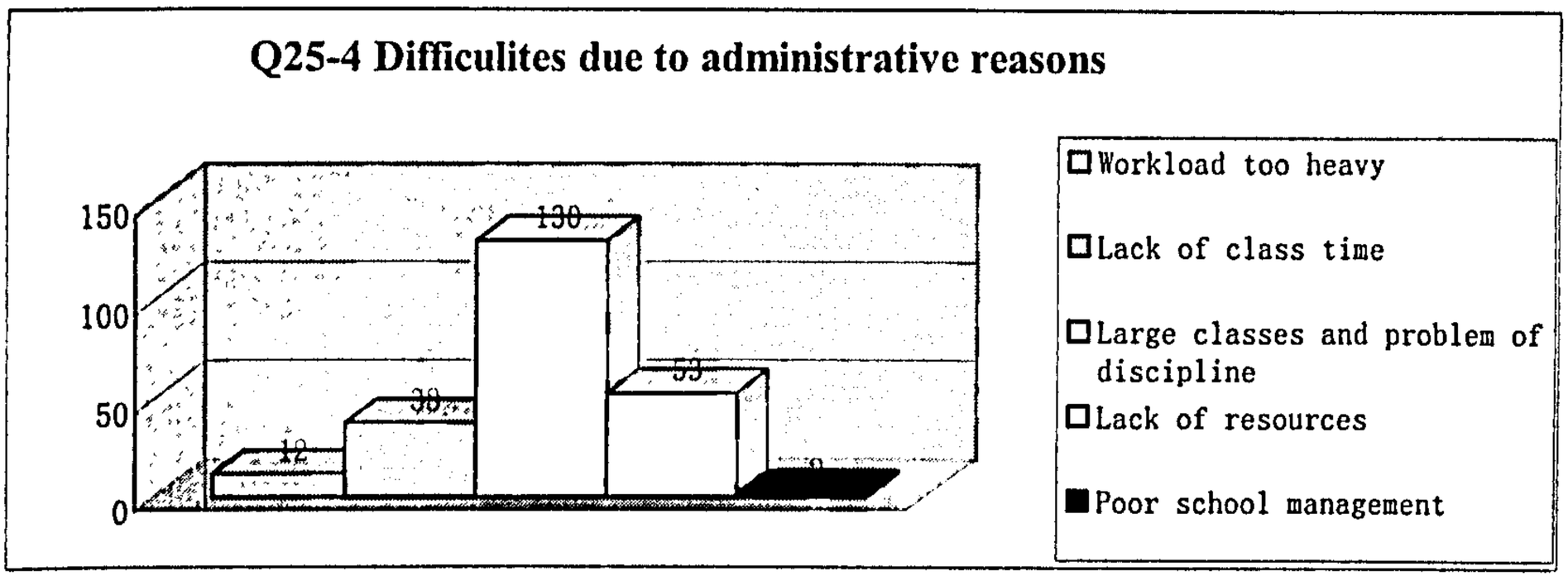
Figure 5.27 Difficulties in implementing the new ideology



As we can see, lack of administrative and organisational support was the biggest hurdle for implementing the new ideology. Figure 5.28 below gives a detailed picture of where the administrative problems lie. 130 participants listed large classes as one of the main difficulties. There are basically two issues related to large classes that perplex all these teachers: one is the problem of discipline. The large number of children in one class makes discipline extremely difficult to control (e.g. No.695, 591, 28, 260, 262, 263, 324, 435, 601, 715, and 720); the other is the possibility for the teacher to cater for individual needs in a large class. Many of them expressed worries about their capability in keeping order when organizing activities and dealing with a polarised class with mixed ability children (e.g. No.64, 78, 234, 255, 289, 293,304, 317, 574, 581, 630, and 763). For many of them discipline is a real headache without which learning can hardly take place. Lack of resources was seen as another administrative problem (Total 53). At the same time, 38 teachers thought that the class time for teaching English was not sufficient to allow more student participation

and to cover the curriculum or materials. 12 teachers thought that their workload was too heavy, which prevented them from giving attention to the new curriculum (see Figure 5.28).

Figure 5.28 Difficulties due to administrative reasons



For those difficulties attributed to the students, many teachers thought that the young age of learners equalled low ability in learning and self-control (No.210, 522, 348, 411,303, 334, 316, 352, 186, 331, 494, 490, 663, 643, 434, 757, and No.573). Some thought that children were lazy (No.390, No.142), not active enough (No.186, 303, 527, 537, 690, and 704), so they had to be forced by the teacher to learn (No.537). Also, they were not interested and motivated (No.411, No.767), not confident, afraid of speaking/timid (No.141, 389, 653, 528, 460, 443, No. 352), used to the teacher-dependent mode of learning and did not have good learning habits (No.316, 348, 456, 523, 597, 723, and No.754,). Another reason relating to learners was the divergent abilities among learners - some being very capable while some were not and such differences made it difficult for teachers to achieve the required teaching objectives (No.103, 108, 611, 635, 658, 588, 697, and 710). Quite a few appealed for solutions dealing with serious polarisation among learners and ways in coping with slow learners (e.g. No.111, 710, 697, 540, and 588).

For those difficulties attributed to teachers, 39 participants thought they had low personal capability, such as lack of experience with the new approach (No.263, 589, and 719), lack of a good understanding of LAMP and were therefore unable to make learners the main participants (No.445), lack of effective methods to motivate learners (No.308, 335, and 619), lack of effective instructional strategies (No.321,

382, 407, 413, 421, 430, 520,474, and 755), inability to manage the degree of LC, i.e. when and how much to let go (No. 465), lack of ability to make learners speak up and participate actively (No. 655, 665, and 708), and lack of English language proficiency (No.526, No.775).

Two more difficulties spelt out by the participants were lack of support from both the school or the parents and the constraint caused by the testing system (Total 36 and 37 respectively, see Figure 5.27). These two are interrelated in a sense that parents are concerned about the test results of their children and therefore are not concerned with the way how their children learn. As a result it pressures teachers to teach simply for the test. The following quote represents the dilemmas and struggles that many participants face:

> We should promote LAMP/LC. However, the educational system of our country determines the difficulties we face. Teachers lack opportunities for training, and teaching to the test is still prevalent despite many efforts to change it – different soup with the same medicine. To cope with tests, teachers have little time to think how to teach in a learner-centred way. As schools give priority to excellent exam results of the students, this inevitably results in the irritability and impatience of the teachers towards the learners. Also, children's English level is low and parents give no attention. (Participant No.154)

Besides all of the above difficulties, a few participants mentioned the difficulty level of the textbooks they used, which made it hard for them to implement LAMP/LC (13 in total). They felt that the textbooks they used were far more too difficult for the children to learn within the specified time-frame and teaching objectives.

A few other comments made by individual respondents are also worth our attention. For example, participant No. 702 who was the only one explicitly against the promotion of the learner-centred approach, believed that TC and LC should be combined to meet the needs of both the children and the curriculum. A few others noted that LAMP/LC should be promoted with caution – not to be carried too far (e.g. No.252, 565, and 625). Also, two teachers noted that in many classrooms the form rather than the substance of LC was taken (No.252, No.714). They worried that

learning was made happy and enjoyable but not necessarily effective in helping children to learn. Participant No. 261 pointed out that learning based on interest would not last long.

The following remarks made by participant No.589 can perhaps best summarise the feelings of most teachers toward implementing LAMP/LC:

> I think it is absolutely necessary to promote LAMP/LC because this is the trend in educational reform and in the new curriculum. It gives, in fact, a very good opportunity for us to change the old beliefs in teaching and try to give students the chance to become self-directed learners or to grow more autonomous. However, we do have some difficulties as we are still in the process probing for new ways of teaching and we lack experience. Moreover, we have large classes and our pupils are still very young in age and they are still weak in self-regulation. The overall environment is to be improved to help promote independent learners. Because of all this, we can only do what is possible in our context and explore within the constraints that we live in.

What is clear so far is that whether a new approach or ideology can be implemented or not does not simply depend on teachers' beliefs or whether they are willing to try out new ideas, but on many other factors. Changing the ideology on the part of the school leaders and establishing administrative support system, setting up new assessment systems, as well as providing resources are fundamental to enable teachers to implement change.

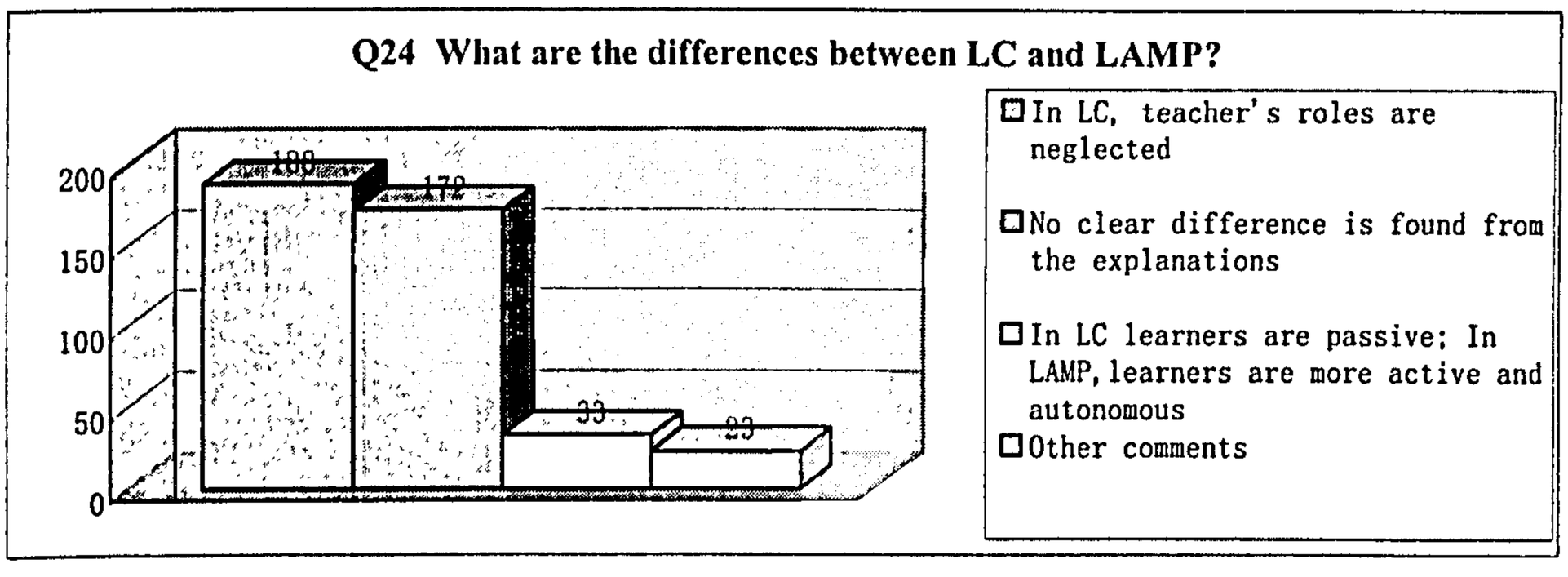
5.10 Differences between LC and LAMP

In order to find out whether there exist any differences between the notion of LC (Western) and the notion of LAMP (Chinese), a question is designed in the questionnaire to ask the respondents what they think. Out of 1000 respondents, 834 gave their answers to the question. Among them, 584 (70%) believed there was a difference while 250 (30%) did not think so.

For those who believed that there was a difference, 410 respondents gave their explanations (see Figure 5.29 and Data-coding sheet 4 in Appendix 13). Among them, 188 respondents (46%) believed that there was an obvious neglect of teachers' roles in LC (See Table 5.16) while 172 respondents (42%) were unable to explain clearly where the differences were although they thought there were differences (See Table

5.17). At the same time, 33 respondents (8%) believed that learners were more passive in the LC approach because learners were left on their own for learning but with the LAMP approach, learners were more active and autonomous because they were guided by teachers (Figure 5.29).

Figure 5.29 What are the differences between LC and LAMP?



The following presents some explanations given by the respondents who saw an obvious neglect of teachers' roles in LC.

Table 5.13 Differences between LC and LAMP

Learner-centred teaching (LC)	Learner-as-main-participants (LAMP)	
Students enjoy absolute freedom in the learning process;	The teacher plays the role of a guide in the learning process	No.157
It means centring teaching on the students no matter what they do is right or wrong. The teachers exercises little control over them;	Making students the main participants in learning but should not ignore the teacher's role.	No.159
Learning contents are determined by the learners;	The teacher acts as a guide or leader in the learning process.	No.168
Whatever happens in the classroom, whether it is right or wrong, the teacher has no say.	Under the correct guidance of the teacher, learners activate their thinking and demonstrate their talents and personal traits.	No.170
Students do whatever they like;	Students acquire knowledge, develop attitude and motivation under the teacher's guide and help.	No.175
Ignores the teacher's role as an organiser and guide;	It includes the teacher's role as the guide.	No.183
Everything is centred on learners in the classroom, ignoring teachers' roles;	With the teacher being the guide, learners learn autonomously.	No.239
Completely disregard teachers' roles;	Not only allow students to explore and discover things in learning but also allow the teacher to be a guide. This means both hands must be used and must be used firmly as well.	No.240

There is less that the teacher can do;	There is more the teacher can do.	No.290
It is mainly students' self-learning without the teacher's involvement;	It is mainly students' learning but with the teacher being the guide and organiser.	No.347
The teacher is led by students.	Students learn actively with the teacher providing guidance and help.	No.432
The teacher has no principles himself, completely controlled by the students;	Making students active participants in learning with the teacher being the guide.	No.521
The teacher follows the students in everything they do;	Students are the main participants with the teacher assisting learning. The two sides participate in the process simultaneously.	No.536
Everything is decided by children.	Children's intentions and interests are given priority but at the same time position the teacher's guidance properly.	No.548
The teacher becomes the slaves of learners and there is no rule to follow;	Learners learn through experience and the teacher functions as a guide with all the activities designed for helping learners learn better.	No.679
There is no direction in learning;	There is clearly direction and purpose which is based on students' reasonable needs.	No.710

Other comments include:

- I feel that the teacher's role is ignored in learner-centred teaching. However, in LAMP, it gives the teacher a recognised position. (217)
- Teacher-centred teaching is leftist; learner-centred teaching is rightist. LAMP not only recognises the learners' central position in learning but also stresses the teacher's role as a guide. (730)
- If everything is decided by the students in learning, what's the point of having a teacher? With LAMP, learners are the masters of their own learning and the teacher is the guide. (759)
- Learner-centred teaching always centres teaching on the students, over-emphasises students' autonomy; with LAMP, the teacher still undertakes the role of a guide and organiser. The two sides facilitate and complement each other.(530)
- In LC approach, the teacher follows learners in walking while with the LAMP approach, the teacher leads learners in walking and gradually let learners walk by themselves. (60)
- LC over-emphasises the learner's roles while ignoring the teacher's roles. With LAMP, students are the main participants; and teaching and learning are based on the understanding of learners' cognitive needs and the important roles played by the teacher. (726)

As we can see from the above, to many teachers, LC means discarding the teacher totally with an unrealistic emphasis on the role of the learner in the learning process. In contrast, the LAMP approach legitimises the teacher's position in teaching and recognises the teacher as a guide to aid learning.

However, over 172 participants who believed there were differences between the two notions of LC and LAMP and who also tried to explain the differences ended up with explanations presenting no clear differences. Respondent No 124 admitted that the differences were so subtle for her that she could not explain them in words. The following presents some of the explanations which do not seem to explain what or where the differences are.

Table 5.14 Explanations given showing no clear difference between LC and LAMP

Learner-centredness (LC)	Learner-as-main-participants (LAMP)	
Consider learners' needs as much as possible when designing lessons;	Make learners the main participants in classroom activities.	No.3
In classroom teaching;	In language practice.	No.16
All teaching procedures are designed and carried out for learners;	Learners participate fully in the whole process of teaching and learning.	No.21
Design teaching activities according to students' performance;	The teacher has certain teaching objectives. He/she helps students master knowledge (including cooperative learning) based on students' cognitive and general abilities.	No.32
Everything is for the learners;	Aiming for the learners' autonomous learning.	No.41
The teacher centres teaching on learners;	Learners take the most important position in learning.	No.47
Learning activities are designed and implemented from the learners' point of view;	All teaching strategies aim to help develop learners' individual characters and facilitate personal growth.	No.52
Students are masters of their own learning. They raise questions and solve problems;	Students participate in activities, active in thinking and self-assessment.	No.96
All teaching serves the purpose of students' learning;	Students exercise their autonomy under the teacher's guidance and are willing to learn and use the language.	No.98
Teaching faces all levels of learners;	Learners participate extensively.	No.116

At the same time, many explanations given showed a great deal of confusions about the two terms. Some teachers thought that in the LC approach, learners were actually passive because everything had already been designed for them by the teacher while with the LAMP approach, learners could be more active as they were guided by the teacher. But some others thought just the opposite. The following presents some examples:

- With LC approach, all activities are designed and developed around students. However, students can be passive receivers of the contents

designed for them. With the LAMP approach, decisions are in the hands of students with the teacher only playing the role of a guide. (No.302)

- With the LC approach, the teacher is in control while with LAMP, the teacher guides while students develop autonomously. (No.693)
- In the LC approach, teachers are active, students are passive. All activities are guided actively by the teacher while learners get involved passively. In the LAMP approach, learners are masters of their own learning. They learn with an active attitude. (No.683)
- With the LC approach, teaching centres on students streesing their mastering of knowledge; with the LAMP approach, students are given opportunities or space to demonstrate and develop themselves. (No.768)
- LC can activate learner interests and encourage active participation for implementing quality-oriented education; with the LAMP approach, teachers cannot let go and therefore learners will not be able to participate actively (No.363).

5.11 Main features of a LAMP classroom

In order to find out about teachers' perceptions on the typical features of a LAMP classroom, all participants were asked to give a list of possible indicators which they believed reflected LAMP in the classroom. 647 participants responded to the question and most of them gave more than three indicators, resulting in a long list of 1656 indicators. All the indicators were then word-processed, tabulated and carefully studied. Three broad themes emerged which concerned (1) Teachers and teaching (637 entries, 39%); (2) Learners and learning (776 entries, 47%); (3) Positive learning environment (203 entries, 12%). There were about 40 irrelevant comments including 6 negative ones (3%). Through content analysis, indicators within each theme were further categorised. Under the first theme, 'Teachers and teaching', five sub-categories were derived. They are: teachers' roles; effective instructional strategies; caring for learners' cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social development; attention to individual differences; classroom management and effective use of resources. The longest list of indicators centred on the teachers' effective instructional strategies. Similarly, under the theme of 'Learners and learning', six sub-categories were extracted. They are: learners' roles, motivational and affective development; cognitive development; metacognitive development;

social/ interpersonal development; and language development. The longest list of indicators was found to be focused on learners' cognitive development. The third theme: 'Positive learning environment' was further categorised into classroom learning atmosphere and teacher-learner relationship. Each was illustrated with some specific indicators given by the respondents. The themes and their respective indicators were summarised based on all contributions collectively rather than on statistical analysis of each individual indicator. The following presents the results (see Table 5.15; 5.16 and 5.17).

Table 5.15 Theme 1: Teachers and teaching

	Main features	Specific indicators
Teachers and Teaching	1. Teachers' roles	♦ Teachers are lesson designers, organisers, facilitators, participants, helpers, consultants, guides, and learning companions not just knowledge providers; ♦ Teachers help learners develop listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.
	2. Effective instructional strategies	♦ Teaching aims for all learners not just the able ones; ♦ Teachers discuss learning objectives with learners; ♦ Teachers prepare lessons very carefully; ♦ Teachers build new knowledge on learners' existing knowledge, experience, interests as well as their current level of language proficiency; ♦ Teaching tasks can involve all learners actively; ♦ Teachers allow learning to take place step by step and there is a natural transition from task to task; ♦ Teachers cultivate learners' independent thinking; ♦ Teachers use concrete objects whenever possible; ♦ There is a balance between teachers' talking time (explanations) and learners' learning time; ♦ Teachers allow learners choices in learning.
	3. Caring for learners' affective cognitive, meta-cognitive, and social-cultural, developments	♦ Teachers encourage cooperative learning; ♦ Teachers respect individual learners; ♦ Teachers help learners become independent in thinking and learning; ♦ Teachers are patient with slow learners; ♦ Teachers allow errors to occur in learning.
	4. Attention to individual differences	♦ Teachers care for individual learners by providing different ways of learning; ♦ Teachers do not evaluate learners using one standard but encourage and praise progress made.

	5 Classroom management skill and effective use of resources	♦ Teachers use resources and technology wisely and effectively; ♦ Teachers have good skills in managing discipline; ♦ Teachers are capable of bringing diverted learners back to the right track of learning; ♦ Teachers create meaningful learning context.

Table 5.16 Theme 2: Learners and learning

	Main features	Specific indicators
Learners and Learning	1. Learners' roles	♦ Learners change from passive followers to active participants; ♦ All learners have opportunities to participate and gain knowledge, not just a few able ones in the class.
	2. Motivational and affective development	♦ Learners are enthusiastic, confident and interested in learning; ♦ Learners are willing and active to participate in activities; ♦ Learners are willing to express their own ideas; ♦ Learners are willing to take risks and are not afraid of making mistakes.
	3. Cognitive development	♦ Learners learn through active thinking; ♦ Learners learn through discovery and exploration; ♦ Learners learn through problem-solving; ♦ Learners learn through experience and hands on activities: ♦ Learners learn though analogy; ♦ Learners have opportunities to ask and answer questions; ♦ Learners have opportunities to demonstrate their capabilities and express their ideas or opinions; ♦ Learners have opportunities to construct new knowledge; ♦ Learners demonstrate imaginations and creativity in learning.
	4. Metacognitive development	♦ Learners are involved in self-assessment; ♦ Learners have choices in learning; ♦ Learners develop good learning habits; ♦ Learners develop some learning strategies.
	5. Social/ interpersonal development	♦ Learners' individuality can be observed; ♦ Learners have opportunities to learn cooperatively in pairs or in small groups; ♦ Learners are motivated and active in participating in activities; ♦ Learners have opportunities to interact with the teacher and other learners.
	6. Language development	♦ Learners master the language knowledge well and have opportunities to use the knowledge to express themselves; ♦ Learners develop awareness of the language as a system; ♦ Learners develop skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing; ♦ Improvement in language competence.

Table 5.17 Theme 3: Positive learning environment

	Main features	Specific indicators
Positive learning environment	1. Learning atmosphere	♦ There is a feeling of comfort and security, no pressure given to the learners; ♦ Learning atmosphere is lively, relaxed, democratic, harmonious, active and interesting; ♦ Learners are active but in good order.
	2. Teacher and learner relationship	♦ Teachers and learners demonstrate good relations; ♦ Teachers are happy to teach, learners are willing to learn; ♦ Teachers and learners respect each other.

The three lists above, to a certain degree, reflect the participants' perceptions of an ideal LAMP classroom with teachers as supporters and learners as main participants in a positive learning environment. For them, learners and learning interact with teachers and teaching to achieve utmost learning results under relaxed and supportive learning environment created by the teacher. However, how teachers actually teach to implement the new ideology is yet to be investigated. The question is: can this list of indicators identified by the teachers be used as criteria for observing teaching? The answer is: although these indicators may be useful for us to understand teachers' conceptions of LAMP, they are not suitable for examining classroom teaching. The reasons are as follows: first of all, some of the indicators may be easy to observe (e.g. group/pair work or hands-on activities) while others may not (e.g. teachers' scaffolding learning or cultivating children's independent thinking). Secondly, using these indicators for evaluating a lesson may lead to very subjective results as many of them depend on the observers' personal judgement to decide whether a teaching behaviour reflect LAMP/LC or not. Thirdly, it may be fine if the purpose of the observation is to evaluate how learner-centred the lesson is but it will not be fine if the purpose is to study the typical LAMP/LC features of classroom teaching which need to be identified through observing classroom teaching. What is more, it may well be very difficult to observe all the LAMP/LC indicators in one lesson from one teacher.

5.12 Main findings from the questionnaire study

The following summarises the main findings from the questionnaire study:

- The primary EFL teaching profession in China is characterised by relatively young female teachers with the majority having less than two years of teaching experience and almost half holding non-English subject degrees. They teach under the national curriculum with prescribed textbooks in diversified teaching contexts, e.g. location of schools, workload, class size, availability of resources, and degrees of support for change, etc.
- An overwhelming majority of the teachers welcome the idea of LAMP/LC and see its value and relevance to improving Chinese primary foreign language teaching. Most of their beliefs and reported practices are in line with the ideology although some degrees of discrepancies are found in the percentages of what teachers reported they did as opposed what they believed in. At the same time, teachers stressed their roles as knowledge provider and organiser, the teaching of the basics, and the importance of discipline.
- Regarding their classroom approach to teaching, most teachers prefer the TDLC approach which is neither TC nor LC. They teach with blended methods and techniques drawing from both TC and LC.
- Most teachers are found to love their profession and are confident in their abilities to cope with change. Most are also positive about their teaching context in terms of the support given to them for implementing change. However, a number of contextual factors are identified as hindering the implementation of LAMP/LC in the classroom, which include lack support from the school, parents and community; lack of resources; low age of children; large classes and the issue of discipline; heavy work-load; curriculum requirement; the imcompatible exam system, and teachers' personal capabilities linguistically and pedagogically. It is believed that large classes and heavy workload make caring for every child and allowing every child to participate simply not possible.
- A majority of the teachers believe that the roles of teachers as knowledge provider and organiser are still important in a learner-centred classroom. Instead of giving up the traditional roles in face of the new curriculum, they choose to add new roles required by the new curriculum.
- There exists some confusion as to what LC actually means as the term itself is semantically misleading. To quite a number of teachers, it means teachers give up control completely and pupils do whatever they want to do. There are also confusions about what LAMP means. However, clear concerns can be found from many teachers over the balance between teaching and learning.

CHAPTER 6 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Chapter 5 focused on analyzing the questionnaire data which constitutes the first phase of the study for answering Research Question 1 (concerning teachers' attitudes towards and general beliefs about LAMP/LC); and Research Question 2 (their reported classroom practices and approaches of teaching, as well as the perceived constraints for implementing LAMP/LC). The second phase of the study, which involved classroom observations, teacher self-reflections and various forms of interviews, is the focus of the present chapter which attempts to answer Research Question 3 – What do the practices of generally accepted good teachers reveal about LAMP/LC in Chinese primary schools and the underlying factors that determine the kind of practices observed? The aim is to identify some important meanings of LAMP/LC and some typical features or patterns of good practices in the Chinese primary EFL classrooms. Alexander (2000) notes that teaching follows patterns. An outsider who observes a large number of lessons in different schools is almost certainly in a better position to perceive these patterns than those who are located in just one school. But interpreting the patterns we need the help of those 'who have created the constellation of actions on which we choose to superimpose our patterns' (p.269). Therefore, data from self-reflections and interviews are used wherever relevant to highlight or illuminate points and issues emerging from the observation data. Also, in the last section of this chapter (6.3.9), comments and points made in the post lesson discussions are included for the purpose of examining potential influences on the teachers' choices of pedagogies from a wider social, cultural, institutional, and classroom context. Comments from the audience for the lessons observed may also be relevant.

The following provides, first of all, a general overview of all the lessons observed with some background information provided about the teachers, followed by a rationale for the approach of analysis, before moving on to a more detailed presentation of the qualitative data.

6.1 A general overview of the lessons and teachers observed

Table 6.1 below provides a general picture of all the lessons observed with regard to the numbers, locations and grade levels.

Table 6.1 Numbers, location and grade level of the lessons observed

Grade level / Locations	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Total lessons observed
Beijing	1		3		1		5
Tianjin	1	1					2
Chengdu	1	2	1	1			5
Mianyang			1	1			2
Shenzhen				1		1	2
Zhongshan	1	1					2
Total	**4**	**4**	**5**	**3**	**1**	**1**	**18**

As we can see from Table 6.1, the 18 lessons observed were from six different cities, of which 5 were from Beijing, 5 from Chengdu, and 2 each from the cities of Tianjin, Mianyang, Shenzhen and Zhongshan. As regarding the grade levels, 4 lessons were from grade 1, 4 from grade 2, 5 from grade 3, 3 from grade 4, and one each from grade 5 and 6. The fact that there were more lessons observed in the lower grades is that, as explained earlier, the implementation of the new English curriculum just entered its fourth year when the observation took place. The two lessons from grade 5 and 6 were observed in Beijing and Shenzhen where English had been offered in the primary school for a number of years prior to the national curriculum.

Table 6.2 below provides more information on the teachers observed with their age, degrees held, teaching experiences, class size, school location and date of observation. There is also information about their involvement in self-reflections and participation in interviews after the lessons, as well as numbers of observers present when the lessons were given.

Table 6.2 Information about all the teachers observed

No.	Gender	Age	Degree held	Teaching experience	Date of observation	Grade level	Class size	Self reflection	Interview	School	Location	Number of observer(s)
T1	F	33	BA	14 years	27-Apr-05	Grade 1	40	No	Individual	No.3 Zhongguan-cun Primary	Beijing	1
T2	F	31	BA	11 years	4-Apr-05	Grade 1	24	Yes	Pulic	Machangdao Primary	Tianjin	50-60
T3	F	34	Certificate	9 years	16-Mar-05	Grade 1	22	Yes	Group + 1individual	Liangshuijing Primary	Chengdu	30
T4	F	25	Certificate	3 years	1-Apr-05	Grade 1	40	No	No	Yongkang Primary	Zhongshan	200-300
T5	F	24	BA	2 years	4-Apr-05	Grade 2	44	Yes	Pulic	Primary attached to Tianijin Normal Univ.	Tianjin	50-60
T6	F	29	BA	7 years	16-Mar-05	Grade 2	51	Yes	Group	Liangshuijing Primary	Chengdu	30
T7	F	24	Certificate	5 years	18-Mar-05	Grade 2	50	Yes	Group	Longjianglu Primary-branch	Chengdu	30
T8	F	26	Certificate	4 years	1-Apr-05	Grade 2	40	No	No	Yongkang Primary	Zhongshan	200-300
T9	F	26	BA	6 years	7-Mar-05	Grade 3	48	Yes	Group	Shiyou Fuxiao Primary	Beijing	15
T10	F	29	Certificate	10 years	28-Api-05	Grade 3	40	No	Pair	No 1 Experimental Primary	Beijing	1
T11	F	30	BA	11 years	28-Api-05	Grade 3	40	No	Pair	No 1 Experimental Primary	Beijing	1
T12	F	24	BA	3 years	16-Mar-05	Grade 3	37	Yes	Group	Liangshuijing Primary	Chengdu	30
T13	F	26	BA	4 years	14-Mar-05	Grade 3	44	Yes	Group	Mianyang Foreign Languages School	Mianyang	20
T14	F	24	BA	2 years	16-Mar-05	Grade 4	48	Yes	Group	Liangshuijing Primary	Chengdu	30
T15	F	26	BA	4 years	14-Mar-05	Grade 4	40	Yes	Group	Mianyang Foreign Languages School	Mianyang	20
T16	F	31	Certificate	13 years	30-Mar-05	Grade 4	53	No	No	Luoling FL Primary	Shenzhen	40-50
T17	F	28	BA	8 years	7-Mar-05	Grade 5	53	Yes	Group	Shiyou Fuxiao Primary	Beijing	15
T18	F	34	BA	14 years	31-Mar-05	Grade 6	50	Yes	Pulic	Huaqiaocheng Primary	Shenzhen	40

From Table 6.2 we can see that these 18 teachers vary in a number of aspects. Their ages range between 24 and 34 with primary teaching experience varying from 2 to 14 years. 12 out of 18 (two thirds) hold a BA degree in English while the rest hold a three-year college certificate in English. It needs to be pointed out that only two of them were straight university graduates, the rest obtained their degrees part-time recently from continuing education colleges as it is still an unusual choice for university graduates to take teaching positions in primary schools. The class-sizes of these teachers also vary but a majority of them teach a class between 40 and 50 children, only two lessons observed had 22 and 24 children respectively. One of them (T2 from Tianjin) is from a private school; the other (T3 from Chengdu) has a split-half lesson once a week for grade 1 children which is normal practice for that particular school while her normal class size is 44. Moreover, the lessons were observed under different circumstances with 2 lessons observed by 200-300 teachers in a big lecture hall, 10 lessons taking place in normal classrooms observed by 1-30 teachers with the rest taking place in bigger than usual classrooms specially arranged to allow 40-60 observers.

12 teachers out of 18 gave a short self-reflection report to the observer(s) after their lessons and 15 of them participated in an interview. Of the 18 lessons observed, 17 were new lessons and one was a review lesson given by T18. T18 had a review lesson because her pupils in Grade 6 were facing graduation examinations at the time of the observation and they had moved into the revision phase. The analysis of the data will concentrate mainly on the 17 new lessons.

6.2 The approach taken for analyzing the qualitative data

Many classroom observation studies make a close examination of particular aspects of teaching, such as 'classroom interaction patterns', 'teacher talk', 'teacher questioning' or 'feedback forms' using statistics to make generalisations. Such kinds of generalisation, as pointed out by Alexander (2000:267), are of 'little value unless they lead to the formation of general principles and theories which take our understanding and our practice forward'. It is also recognised that by looking at

particular aspects of teaching, we often make a coherent lesson atomised (ibid), in the same way as by examining individual trees we might lose sight of a whole forest. Alexander (ibid: 296) stresses the importance of a holistic analysis on observation data. He points out that for an aspect of teaching to be fully understood, we have to understand and interpret it by reference to what preceded and what followed it. Therefore, a balance of research attention is needed to examine both the whole and parts of a lesson.

To examine the whole as well as the parts of the lessons, I transformed all the lesson transcripts (see Appendix 16 for examples) into correspondingly formatted tables (see Appendix 17 for examples) so that stages, teacher/ pupil activities, interaction patterns, length of time for different stages, and chunks of activities were identified. Although such formatted tables helped to highlight stages and activities, it is still difficult for such formatted tables to succinctly provide a whole picture of a lesson. To obtain such a picture, all the transcripts were then transformed into 18 narratives (see Appendix 18 for examples) – to give a clearer picture of a whole lesson by describing what the teacher and pupils did at each major stage and the transitions between stages (e.g. Alexander, 2000: 278-296). The process of transforming the observation data from transcripts into formatted tables and then to narratives was very time-consuming but it not only helped me to re-organise data for categorisation but also enabled me to familiarise myself with the data to a much greater extent.

Based on the three forms of observation data, I began to address the issue in question – what features of pedagogy or practices can be found from classrooms where teachers are attempting to promote LAMP? However, two more issues need to be attended before the analysis can proceed: (1) what categories should be used to analyse the data; (2) how the data is going to be analysed. That is to say, what approach should be taken to analyse the data.

With respect to the first question, as this study aims to examine Chinese teachers' teaching behaviours in their particular teaching contexts under the new

curriculum promoting LAMP, it is important that we identify what these good teachers do when teaching. Thus, using pre-conceptualised categories to analyse data would seem inappropriate. As Richards (2003:191) notes, analysis based on pre-determined categories may be revealing for looking at particular aspects of a research area and it may also seem 'easier', but we may very likely end up missing some important things for us to understand what is happening. Punch (1998) also reminds us that if we do not understand enough about the kind of theory we want to apply then 'we should approach the data as open mindedly as possible guided by research questions' (p.168). The analysis, thus, was data-driven. In other words, data was approached with an open-mind to allow categories to emerge. However, it is inevitable that the process of categorisation is a process of conceptualisation which is bound to be influenced by one's previously developed conceptions or conventionally labeled categories. Consequently, the categories evolved as a result of constant interaction between close examination and re-examination of the observation data and the conceptually driven framework derived from the literature review, LAMP/LC indicators identified by the participants through the questionnaire data and my previous classroom observation schema. Such interplay helped to refine and expand the list of categories. It needs to be noted that many indicators derived from the literature review and questionnaire data may not be directly observable as classroom behaviours. Similarly, what are observed may not have been identified as indicators of LC from the literature or LAMP from the questionnaire data. Consequently, the framework of analysis has to allow for a mix of conceptual and emergent categories (Strauss, 1987).

As for the approach to data analysis, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to analyse the 18 lessons in order to examine general patterns using statistics on the one hand, and to reveal deep-level teaching and learning processes using transcripts from observations and interviews, on the other. It was realised that a balance needed to be achieved in terms of both the *forms* and the *quality* of teaching as it is often easy to focus on data that is quantifiable while the quality of

learning may be ignored, e.g. types of activities and interaction patterns are easy to identify but deciding on how they provide learning opportunities requires more in-depth analysis of the data. In other words, to what extent the forms of teaching, be it pair/group work or repetitions and imitations, help promote pupils' learning need close examination and analysis of the data. Consequently, the analyses of the observation data took both the *forms* of teaching and the *substance* of learning into consideration while the *parts* as well as the *whole* of the lessons were also attended to.

As discussed in the literature review (Section 3.4.1 and 3.6.2), the distinction made between the *form* and *substance* in learner-centred language teaching is not new. The issue was first raised by Tudor (1992) who noted that the forms of LC, such as pair/group work, might be taken for its substance – sitting in groups or pairs with no need to work cooperatively or collaboratively. However, he did not go further to elaborate his point; nor did he provide research evidence to investigate conditions or factors which might have led to more attention to *form* rather than the *substance of learning*. Brodie *et al* (2002) used the distinction between form and substance for training and analyzing teachers' teaching behaviours and found that indeed some teachers took only the forms without the substance while some more competent teachers could attend to both the forms and the substance (See Section 3.6.1).

By carefully examining the different forms of observation data, categories for analysis gradually emerged, expanded and were refined during the coding process. They are as follows (1) classroom settings – whether classroom settings in terms of space, time, and resources lend themselves to better learning opportunities for children or not; (2) content of the lessons – what lesson topics and linguistic items are covered in each lesson; (3) lesson structure and sequence – how lessons are structured and sequenced to help achieve the learning objectives; (4) classroom interaction patterns and types of activities – how interaction patterns and classroom activities allow or provide learning opportunities; (5) classroom questioning – what

types of questions are most typical of these teachers and how they are used to promote or hinder children's learning; also, whether children are involved in asking questions; if yes what kind of questions children ask and what the nature of them is; (6) classroom feedback forms – how positive and corrective feedback are used to encourage and help children learn; (7) classroom management and general classroom atmosphere – what typical managerial features there are in Chinese primary classrooms to ensure learning and how supportive the classroom atmosphere is; (8) teachers' roles observed. Among these categories, (1) and (3) are seen as providing opportunities to examine the whole of a lesson while the rest focus more on parts. At the same time, both the forms and the substance of teaching and learning were examined wherever relevant within each category. Nvivo 2.0 (a software for analysing qualitative data) was applied based on the above categories to help code the observation data, such as whole-class activity types, instances of pair work and group work, teachers' and pupils' questions, teachers' positive and corrective feedback (See Appendix 19 for examples). By using Nvivo, both quantitative and qualitative analyses are made easier and more manageable. The interview data with self-reflections were examined and coded manually based on a number of themes arising from the data, but due to space limit, they are presented only where relevant for the understanding of the observation data. Some categories derived from classroom observations such as classroom layout, lesson content, lesson structure and sequence were also more susceptible to manual analysis. Therefore the overall analysis of the qualitative data used a combination of manually processed and computer assisted methods.

6.3 Presentation and analysis of the qualitative data

The following presents the analyses of the observation data based on the categories listed above with verbatim quotations from teacher interviews and self-reflection reports inserted wherever relevant. Teachers' general views on the concept of LC and related concerns are also presented based on post-lesson

discussions from both the teachers who taught the lessons and those who observed the lessons.

6.3.1 Classroom settings

Classroom settings refer to classroom layout, duration of lessons, and resources available. As far as classroom layout is concerned, out of the 18 lessons observed, 11 had children sit in lines and rows as illustrated in Figure 6.1 like (A), (C) and (D), varying in one or two rows at the back depending on the number of pupils in each class. 6 teachers had children sit in groups like the ones illustrated in (B) and (E). It needs to be noted that of these 6 teachers, lessons were all taking place in a bigger than usual classroom to allow more space for observers. For T4 and T8, they had their lessons in a big lecture hall and were observed by over 200 teachers. Informal chats with a number of teachers revealed that having children sit in groups is only an occasional arrangement. Lines and rows are still the most common seating arrangement. However, these teachers did not think that having children sit in lines and rows would actually affect the way they taught or the way children learned as children were already quite used to working in pairs or groups in whatever way they sat. One classroom (T3) was arranged in a U shape as illustrated in (F). This was an activity classroom especially designed to allow children more space in the centre for activities but children were allowed to use this room only in split-half lessons once a week.

Classroom layout has been an important indicator of TC or LC in Western literature (See Section 3.2.3). LC classrooms often have 'open plans' and flexibility of grouping to allow children to move around or to work with different partners. However, in school contexts in China where large classes with limited space are common circumstances, most classrooms are arranged in lines and rows. It would also be interesting to find out whether different seating arrangements affected the interaction patterns and degrees of LAMP/LC in the classrooms. These will be further examined in Section 6.3.3 and 6.3.4 where lesson structures and classroom interaction patterns are analysed.

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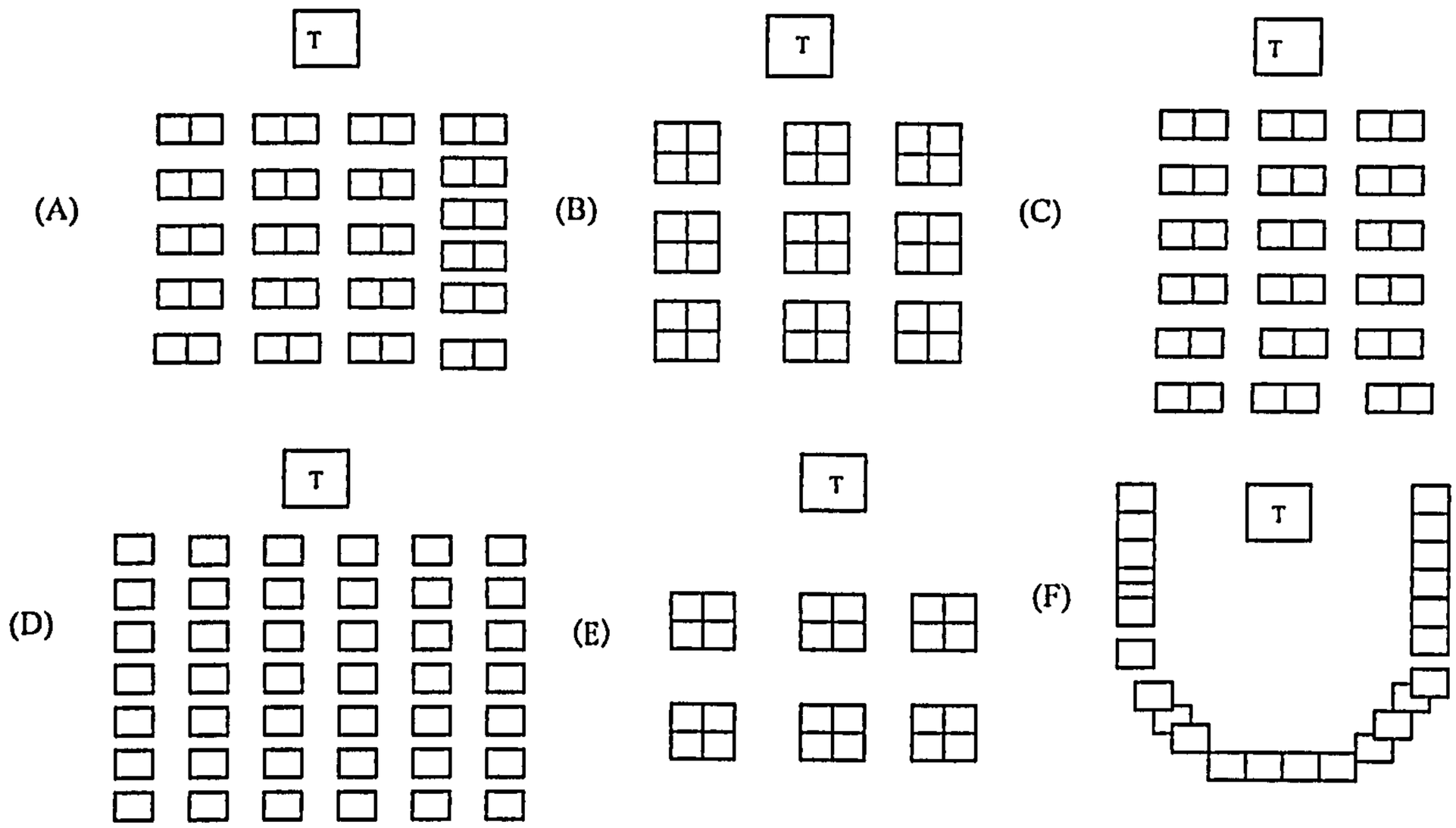
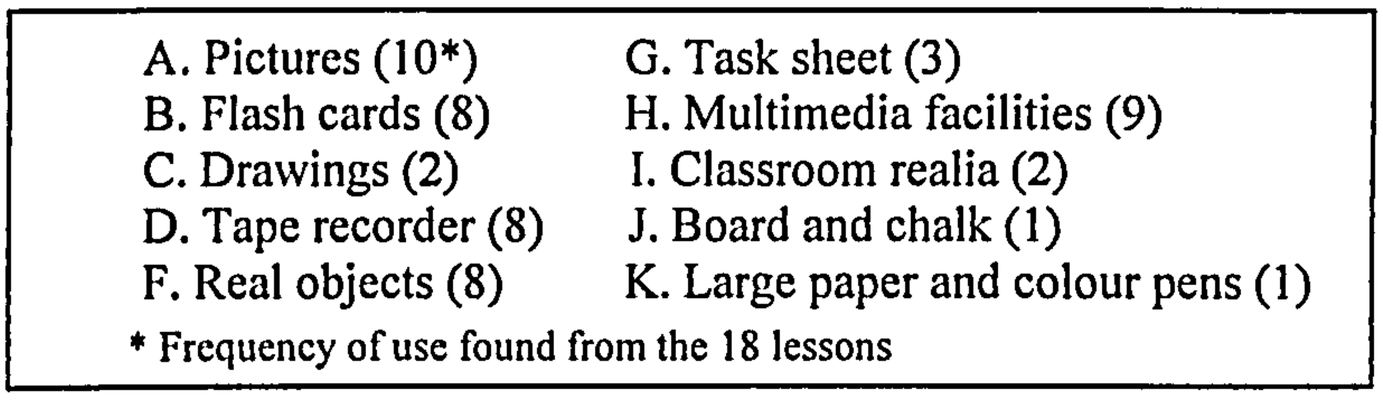
Figure 6.1 Classroom layout



Besides the differences in classroom layout, lesson durations also varied from 30 to 40 minutes. Of the 18 lessons observed, 13 were 40-minute lessons and 5 were 30-minute lessons. This reflects the different arrangement of the class time in different schools based on the time allocation recommended by the national English curriculum for primary schools under the principle of 'shorter periods, more frequency' with a minimum of 80 minutes a week (MOE, 2001). For those schools offering 30-minute lessons, children usually have three to four contact periods a week while many schools offering 40-minute lessons usually have two contact periods a week. In reality, most schools offer 40-minute lessons for 2-3 times a week because a 40-minute lesson is the standard practice for lessons of all other subjects in the primary school.

As far as resources are concerned, all the lessons observed had multimedia facilities in addition to a blackboard, a tape recorder, a video and a TV. Some even had real-object projectors. These teachers were found to have used a combination of teaching aids for creating meaningful contexts and for motivating children in learning. Figure 6.2 below lists the various teaching aids used by the 18 teachers.

Figure 6.2 Teaching aids used in the lessons



T1 Grade 1 (A, B, D, H); T7 Grade 2 (B, F); T13 Grade 3 (D, F);
T2 Grade 1 (B, C. G, H); T8 Grade 2 (A, F, H); T14 Grade 4 (A, B, D, G);
T3 Grade 1 (B, F, H); T9 Grade 3 (A, C, D, I); T15 Grade 4 (A, D);
T4 Grade 1 (A, F, H) T10 Grade 3 (A, B, D, H); T16 Grade 4 (A, H);
T5 Grade 2 (B, F, H) T11 Grade 3 (A, B, D, F); T17 Grade 5 (F, D);
T6 Grade 2 (A, B, G); T12 Grade 3 (J, I); T18 Grade 6 (H, K)

6.3.2 Content of learning

All the lessons observed, except T18's review lesson, were organised around a particular topic such as 'Clothes', 'Food and Drinks', 'Numbers', 'Vegetables', 'A Birthday Party', 'Our school and our classroom', 'Next week's plan', 'My birthday', 'Life in a Castle', etc. along with new vocabulary and grammatical structures. Table 6.3 below lists the main topics and linguistic targets of the 18 lessons.

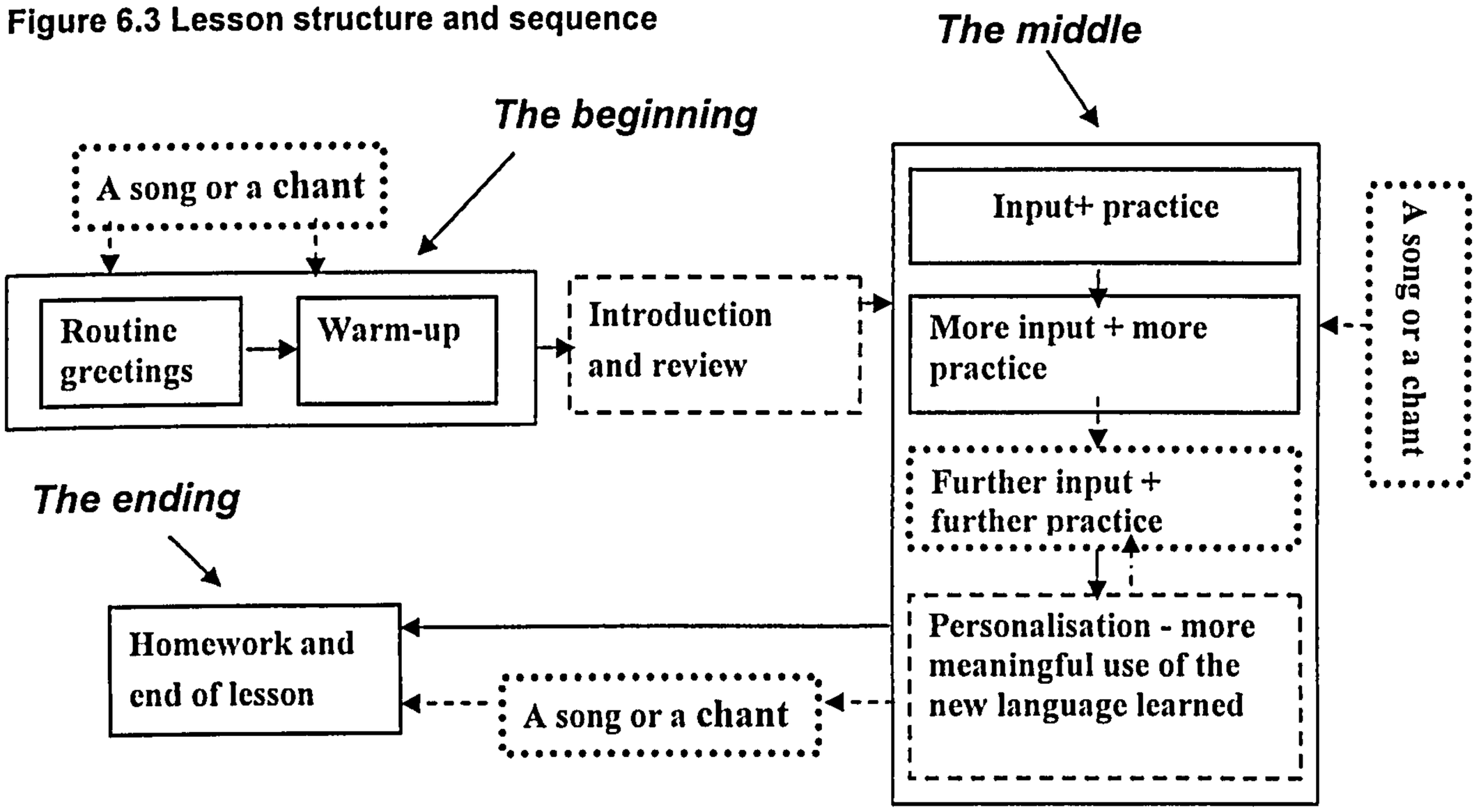
Table 6.3 Contents of learning of the 18 lessons

No	Topics	Contents of learning	No	Topics	Contents of learning
T1	Clothes	Who's wearing a skirt today? Clothes words	**T10**	Buying things	Do you have…? Can I have this one, please?
T2	Food and Drinks	What do you like? food and drinks	**T11**	Buying things	Do you have…? Can I have this one, please?
T3	Stationary	Who has …? Xxx has a… Words about stationary	**T12**	Locations	Prepositions: between, beside, behind, in front of
T4	Food and Drinks	What do you like? food and drinks	**T13**	Telling the time	What time is it? It's 7 o'clock (half past)
T5	Vegetables	What are these? They are eggplants. Words about vegetables	**T14**	Birthday party	What do we need? What can you bring? Food words
T6	My favourite month	Names of the months	**T15**	Next week's plan	On Sunday, I will go to the park.(clean my room; help my mom; do my homework, etc.)
T7	A birthday gift	What is it? Is it a..? Fruit words	**T16**	Life in a Castle	Did they have electric stove? What did they have?
T8	Numbers	How many … are there? There are … Vegetable names	**T17**	Ben's bicycle	Which one do you want, the big one or the small one? Do you want both of them?
T9	Our school	Where is *the art room*? It's on the first floor. Names of classrooms	**T18**	Review	Good habits; School rules; Seasons; Feeling sick

6.3.3 Lesson structure and sequence

Lesson structure and sequence refer to the general organisation and procedure of a lesson. Most lessons observed seem to share some common structural features in sequencing as shown in Figure 6.3 below.

Figure 6.3 Lesson structure and sequence



The lessons observed all have a clear beginning phase, a substantial middle phase and a brief ending despite the fact that they vary in types and order of specific activities. The dotted sections in Figure 6.3 indicate some variations. The beginning of these lessons is most often typified by formulaic routine greetings from the teacher to the whole class followed by some warm-up activities composed of daily exchanges, routine questions, a game or TPR activity to get pupils ready to hear and speak English. The middle phase is the central part of all the lessons which often consists of one to three cycles of new language input and practice by which the teacher breaks down the learning tasks into manageable smaller steps, often leading to a stage of personalisation - opportunities for children to use what they learned, however limited, to express things that are more personal and meaningful. 14 out of 17 new lessons moved to a stage of personalisation. The ending of the lessons is signaled by homework assignments.

The use of songs and chants is a typical feature observed in 15 out of the 18 lessons (See Table 6.4) and most teachers used songs and chants more than once. Songs and chants seemed to have fulfilled a number of purposes. They are used at the beginning of the lesson to engage, to motivate children and also to create a climate of participation and involvement. In the middle of the lessons, they are used for activating children's prior knowledge before introducing new language items or for transition to the next activity. At the end of the lessons, they are used either to consolidate learning or to bring children to a relaxed and happy ending. Children were observed thoroughly enjoying themselves in singing and acting to the music and rhymes. They seemed to possess a natural love for songs and actions, which can immediately engage them physically, mentally, and emotionally. What is more, they do not seem to have difficulty singing or chanting in English. As most of the songs or chants are in one way or anther related to the topic or content of learning, they have functionally been used as tools to facilitate language learning (Cameron, 2001). For example, a song named 'our classroom' was used by T9 while the topic of the lesson is 'our school'. A song of vegetables was used by T5 for the learning the names of some vegetables. Primary textbooks all contained some songs and chants but teachers have also added their own from other sources.

The following provides some specific examples from the lesson transcripts to illustrate the typical features of the beginning, the middle and the ending of these lessons.

6.3.3.1 The beginning

Most lessons started with some kind of a greeting from the teacher to the whole class and the class stands up to greet back. A formal greeting at the beginning is a typical feature to signal the beginning of a lesson and also a cultural ritual for children to show respect for the teacher. This is common for lessons of all subjects in Chinese schools. The only difference is that in an English lesson, greetings are conducted in English serving as a kind of meaningful exchange between the teacher

and children in order to create an English environment for learning the subject. The following presents two excerpts of such greetings from lessons given by T2 and T5.

Excerpt 1 (T2, Grade 1)

T. Class begins
SS. Stand up.
T. Good morning, boys and girls.
SS. Good morning, Annie.
T. How are you?
SS. Fine, thank you. And you?
T. Good. Sit down, please.

Excerpt 2 (T5, Grade 2)

T. Look, I'm a vegetable angel today (with a decorated hat). Now, follow me, 'Vegetable angel'.
SS. Vegetable angel.
T. Angel
SS. Angel (Repeat after the T twice)
T. Hello, boys and girls.
SS. Hello, Vegetable angel!
T. I'm glad to meet you all. Do you like me?
SS. Yes!

Excerpt 1 is the most commonly found routine greetings in English lessons. Excerpt 2 creates a scenario for the new lesson as children are to learn to say the names of different kind of vegetables. Some teachers use it not simply as a routine but also as a way to draw children's attention and raise their morale for learning (see Appendix 20 for more examples).

After the greetings, lessons usually move to a warm-up or review stage which consists of a variety of activities such as daily exchanges typically in the form of 'What day is today?' 'What's the date today?' 'What is the weather like today?' etc. (T3, T9, T10, T11, T15), cued speaking activities (T1, T3, T6, T7, T12, T14, T18), TPR activities or songs and chants related to the new topic of the lesson (T1, T4, T6,T8,), review of vocabulary and structures relevant to the new lesson (T2, T4, T5, T9, T10, T11, T12, T16, T17). These activities are used to familiarise children with commonly asked questions and also to encourage them to use English in a more meaningful way. Because children's English is rather limited for any natural

exchanges and there are limited opportunities outside the classroom for children to use what they learned in class, such warm-up activities designed to create a context for children to hear and use English, to get motivated and prepared, are therefore very important. The following are three examples (see Appendix 21 for more examples).

Excerpt 3 (T11, Grade 3)

T. OK. First of all, who can tell me what is the date today? The date and the weather. What is the date today? What is the date today?

S1. Today is April the 29th.

T. Very good. What day is today?

S2. Today is Friday.

T. Very good. What is the weather like today?

S3. Today is [kloudi].

T. Cloudy.

S3. Cloudy.

T. Very good.

Excerpt 4 (T1, Grade 1)

T: What's your favourite toy, Joy?

S1: My favourite toy is (..) dog.

T: Because… (Waiting)

S1: Because (..) dogs are beautiful.

T: Thank you. Whose favourite toy is boat?

Ss: My favourite toy is boat (.) because { boats can (.) flow on water

T: { boats can flow on water

(Children follow the T and said it with actions)

Excerpt 5 (T9, Grade 3)

T: Today we'll learn something about our school and our classroom. First, I want to know, what do you have in your classroom. What's in the classroom? What's in the classroom? We have a window or I can see a window. What's in the classroom? Sandy.

S2: I can see a desk.

T: OK. You can see a desk. Or we have a desk. And what else? Steve.

S3. I can see blackboard. (Children were seen putting up their hands.)

T. Oh, you can see a blackboard. We have a blackboard.

T. And what else? Roy.

S4. We can see chair.

T. You can see a chair. I can see many many chairs. We have chairs.

6.3.3.2 The middle

The middle phase of the lessons is composed of mainly one to three cycles of 'input and practice' activities usually following an explicit introduction to the new lesson as shown in Figure 6.3. The introduction served to create expectations in terms of what pupils will learn and do in the lesson and it often begins with an activity or a brief question-and-answer session to bridge what is known with what is to be learned. This is then followed by the presentation of new words or structures aided by pictures, flash cards, video or an audio clip to assist understanding in meaningful context before it moves to the practice stage. Most teachers tend to break up the learning load into smaller bits integrating mechanical with meaningful practices before moving to a stage of personalisation. The following provides two examples by using lesson narratives to illustrate the typical procedures of the middle phase of these lessons.

Example 1 (T9, Grade 3)

The topic of the lesson is 'Our school and our classroom'. After a chant and some routine questions, T9 started her lesson by asking children what they can see in the classroom. Children came up with a number of different answers as shown in Excerpt 5 above. Below is a description of the lesson based on T9's lesson narrative from 2′35″:

2′35″ T introduced the lesson topic and asked children what they could see in the classroom. Then children chanted 'In our classroom I can see…' together using fingers to point at different objects they could see in the classroom. Then the teacher took out a picture of a school with three characters in it and asked who they were. Children shouted out their names.

Introduction with a review

6′10″ T asked children to listen to a recording to find out where the three characters were and children had to identify some new location phrases through listening. Then T checked children's understanding and had them repeat after her the new words. Then she used the picture to present a few more new words, such as music room, office, computer room, etc. Children imitated after the teacher both individually and as a whole class.

Input and practice

8′46″ Children listened to the tape again and numbered the pictures in the textbook in the order they heard from the tape after which the teacher checked the answers with some individual children. For each answer, she asked the whole class for verification and also some repetitions.

11′40″ T assigned the third listening task: to find out on which floor those rooms were located. T checked individual students to see if they had understood 'first floor', 'second floor' and 'third floor'. She then drew a picture on the blackboard to illustrate what they meant.

14′21″ Each line of children as a group was given a picture of a room, e.g. computer room, art room, music room, washroom, clinic, etc. with a picture being held by the child sitting in the front row of each group. Children were asked to practice in pairs asking and answering questions about any child in the class. E.g. 'Where is xxx?' 'She is in the library on the first floor.' Then the whole class played a game with representatives from two teams of boys and girls who were to shout out the locations when a pupil's name was nominated by the T, after which some writing task followed. Children were to write down a sentence describing where their classmates were while T monitored by walking around the classroom. T then asked 5 children to read aloud their sentences to the whole class and the whole class was to check whether the sentence was right or wrong according to the group to which the child belonged.

28′15″ -29′20″ T then asked children what they had in their school – what rooms they had and where those rooms were. Children were eager to give their answers. Then, children were asked to write about their own school. The T monitored and helped with some individual children. At the end of the writing task, three children volunteered to introduce their school to the rest of the class by reading to the class what they had written.

More input and practice

Further input with further practice

Personalisation

The following is what T9 reflected on her lesson from which we can see that she was very keen on establishing meaningful contexts for presenting and practicing the new language items. She saw integrating all the four skills as an effective way of teaching.

> In today's class, I started by presenting a picture of a school to children to give them an overall view of the lesson. Through three listening inputs, I dealt with the new words in context and made children practise them

> one by one. Then I gave each group a picture of a classroom and they should say where they are. This is to give them a kind of a meaningful context for practising the language. After that, they were asked to talk about rooms in their own school. Towards the end of the class, as they have practised listening, speaking, and reading, I gave them an opportunity to do some writing so that newly learned things can be consolidated through writing. (T9, Group interview, 7-March-2005)

When asked what kind of roles she played as a teacher in this lesson, she said she played the role of a knowledge provider and a guide and she explains what a guide means in the following:

> When I expected an answer, I did not say it straightaway, but waited for the students to say them out; I only gave them help when it is needed. Also, I use gestures and pictures and help them to find the right word or the right answer. I design activities and guide them to do the activities. … In my teaching, my first aim is to make sure that children love to have English lessons. Then they can master/learn the knowledge required for the lesson. (T9, Group interview, 7-March-2005)

In discussing how this particular lesson reflected LAMP/LC, the following are some comments given by other teachers from the same school in a group interview. We can see that for these teachers, features of LAMP/LC include (1) creating meaningful context; (2) involving active participation on the part of the learner; (3) scaffolding learning to prepare children for meaningful output.

> I think in this lesson, when she (T9) was teaching new vocabulary, she gave each group a picture of a room to create a meaningful context for children to say where they are. I think this reflects LAMP/LC. Also, she designed a competition for children to practice the structure using the first floor, the second floor to motivate boys and girls to report quickly the locations of different children using the context given. Her children became very excited and active and so many of them were all holding their hands high. This also reflects LAMP/LC. (Teacher B, Group Discussion 7-March 2005)

> I think LAMP/LC was not just reflected in the last activity. The previous teaching has also shown some degrees of LAMP/LC. The T was aware of it and prepared students to become more active. When the T asked the student to touch and say English, it is also being learner-centered (Teacher L, Group Discussion 7-March 2005)

The following is another example illustrating the middle phase of T1's lesson based on her lesson narrative.

Example 2 (T1, Grade 1)

The topic of the lesson is 'Clothes'. T1 started her lesson by a routine greeting and some questions and answers. Then the lesson continued as follows:

1'50" The class sang a song 'who is wearing yellow today'. Then T introduced the lesson topic: the clothes. She used a set of pictures of clothes to elicit from children what they already knew. — Introduction

5'03" T asked children to listen to a chant and identify what words were heard from it. T played the tape three times. A number of children were very eager to tell what they heard from it by saying 'I can hear SHIRT' etc. — Input and practice

9'00" T used pictures to introduce new words and children repeated after the teacher the first few new clothes words. And the teacher used TPR activity to check if children understood. E.g. If you are wearing a T-shirt, stand up please.

11'25"T asked children to watch carefully how she pronounced the word 'sweater'. She did it first in a wrong way and then in a correct way. She invited children to say what was wrong and children worked in pairs to check each other's pronunciation. — More Input and practice

12'48" T continued presenting other new words and had children repeat after her.

16'40" She asked children to find the differences between 'shorts' and 'shirt' and tell the class how they could remember them. Children came up with different ideas. T also provided her own way of distinguishing the two words but told children they did not have to follow the way the teacher gave. They could have their own ways.

19'00" More practice on the words presented with repetitions and TPR activities followed by a whole class game: 5 children hold different pictures of clothes facing the class. The whole class shouted: 'Jacket, jacket, turn around' according to the word T showed who stood behind the five children. The whole class watched, gave the right command, and also decided if one of the five children acted correctly. — Further input with further practice

23'10" A one minute memorisation game of the clothes and their colours shown on the blackboard and T asked questions to check if they remembered them. T also encouraged children to be little teachers to ask questions to other children.

27′25″ Children worked in groups of four to do the TPR activity. E.g. Stand up if you like the blue jacket.

31′10″-39′29″ Children worked individually to use stickers to decorate their own picture closet and then described it to the class. T modeled the description and a child also volunteered to do so. Then children worked in pairs to describe their own closet to each other.

Personalisation

This lesson was observed by no other teachers but me. In the follow-up interview with T1, she said that the main content of the lesson was to help children learn the clothes words and she tried to put the words into meaningful context for children to use them so that they could learn more happily and easily. She stressed that children should be encouraged to express their own ideas and that was why she wanted them to describe their own closet and which piece of clothes they liked. The games she used were all familiar games so children all knew the rules so there was no time wasted in organizing the games.

As we can see from the above examples, the two teachers both started their middle phase of teaching with a review or a warm-up in order to build the new knowledge on what pupils already knew and created meaningful contexts for new language items to assist children to construct meaning. The input-and-practice cycles were designed to help children move from where they were before the lesson to where they were expected to be by the end of the lesson around which a variety of activities were organised. On the route to targets, the teachers tried not only to make the learning experiences interesting and enjoyable but also meaningful and personal. The smaller cycles of presentation and practice scaffolded learning in a way that children were enable to understand and gradually develop their ability to use what was learned.

Other teachers' self-reflections on their own lessons also showed that these teachers were very much concerned with the content and objectives that they were supposed to cover and how they could achieve them within the time slot of the lesson. They also showed clear awareness of the need to build new knowledge on

what children already knew and to create meaningful context for children to understand the new language.

> There are two main components in my lesson today. One is the two structures: 'What do we need?' and 'What can you bring?' These two structures are both new and they are built into a context of a school party for children to practise them in a meaningful way. The second task is to learn the song 'The school party'. It is quite a difficult song with some new words in it. ...My teaching objectives are: students are able to use the two structures in communication and are able to sing the song. And I think the two objectives have been fulfilled in general (T6, Self-reflection, 15-March-2005).

> My teaching objectives are two-fold: the first is to help children to understand the story and then they can read it by themselves; the second is to consolidate the new words related to fruits learned in this unit. Children should be able to understand them and say them out, recognise their written forms and can write them correctly. To fulfill these objectives, I started with a duty report, a chant, and a guessing game, which were all designed to familiarise children with the structures and vocabulary they would encounter in the story, including the questions of 'What's this? What's that? Is it a ...?' and their answers. (T7, Self-reflection, 18-March-2005).

> For this lesson, there are two main structures: Where is... or where are.., and children are expected to answer with only the positions. Before this lesson, pupils have already learned the names of the objects in the classroom. .. As this is the first lesson in this unit to learn positions, my objective is to make sure that they understand these words of positions through input and are able to find out where thing are according to the descriptions I gave. (T12, Self-reflection, 16-March-2005)

6.3.3.3 The ending

The ending of the lessons seemed all very brief, mostly with homework assignments. A few teachers ended their lessons simply with a song or chant without giving homework. One teacher (T8) asked children in groups to count and report the number of the prizes (French fries in a box) which served as records for individual participation in class activities and the teacher announced and praised the winner group for their active participation for that lesson.

As the data exemplified, seating arrangements did not seem to have affected the general lesson structure and sequence. In other words, lessons with children seated

in lines and rows were not found significantly different from lessons with children seated in groups as far as lesson structure and sequence were concerned.

6.3.4 Features of classroom interactions

Classroom interaction has been one of the most important aspects of classroom observation studies for the simple reason that 'everything that happens in the classroom happens through a process of live person-to-person interaction' (Allwright, 1984:156). It is through classroom interactions between the teacher and pupils as well as pupils and pupils that teaching and learning take place. This is because learning and development is a social process during which children construct meaning not only based on what they already know but also from interactions with others (Alexander, 2005). In the following, classroom interaction patterns are examined in order to reveal some typical interactional patterns in the 18 lessons observed. As we all know, in a typical traditional classroom, the teacher functions mainly as a knowledge transmitter, who spends most of the class time instructing, questioning and explaining while pupils in such classes, more often than not, passively receive knowledge through memorisation, repetitions, and imitation. In a LAMP/LC classroom on the other hand, one would expect to find more pupil participation in classroom activities, where the teacher acts as a guide and facilitator.

6.3.4.1 Classroom interaction patterns

Table 6.4 below provides a summary of the interaction patterns observed in the 18 lessons. It is presented in terms of the amount of time spent on whole class work, pair work, group work, individual work at desk and the approximate individual participation either nominated by the teacher or volunteered by the pupils in each lesson.

A striking feature that stands out from Table 6.4 is that, in 16 out of 18 lessons, teacher-led (T-led) whole-class work took up 80-90% of the total class time of the lessons observed, be it 30-minute or 40-minute lessons; while pair/group work, observed in 15 out of 18 lessons, constituted a very small proportion of the class time. That is to say, a majority of these teachers spent most of the time doing whole

class work which required all the pupils to work on or attend to the same activity at the same time and seating arrangement did not seem to have made any difference among these teachers. Three teachers (T3, T7, and T13) did not organise any pair/group work at all, among whom T3 spent 100% of her class time (29'30") on whole class activities while the other two (T7 and T13) gave some time for individual work at desks. As whole class activities turned out to be such a prominent feature in the lessons observed, it is worth examining more closely what these activities were and how teachers managed to interact with the pupils during whole-class teaching.

Table 6.4 Classroom interaction patterns of the 18 lessons observed

No.	Classroom layout	Grade Level	Class size	Lesson duration	Whole class work	Pairwork	Group work	Individual work at desk	Individual participation (volunteered or nominated)
T1	Lines and rows	Grade 1	40	40'30"	30'43"(75.5%)	2'47" (2)	2'10"	4'50"(2)	41
T2	Groups	Grade 1	24	41'00"	33'05"(82%)	3'15"	4'40"(2)	×	97
T3	U shape	Grade 1	22	29'30"	29'30"(100%)	×	×	×	51
T4	Groups	Grade 1	40	29'30"	28'11"(96%)	1'19"	×	×	23
T5	Groups	Grade 2	44	39'00"	35'52"(91%)	×	3'08"(2)	×	85
T6	Lines and rows	Grade 2	51	39'00"	35'20""(90.2%)	3'40"	×	×	26
T7	Lines and rows	Grade 2	50	39'40"	32'50(82.5%)	×	×	6'50"(3)	36
T8	Groups	Grade 2	40	32'00"	31'20"(97.5%)	40"	×	×	79
T9	Lines and rows	Grade 3	48	40'23"	34'59" (86%)	1'23"	×	4'01"(3)	45
T10	Lines and rows	Grade 3	40	30'00"	25'25"(84.2%)	2'15"	2'20"	×	33
T11	Lines and rows	Grade 3	40	29'10"	26'15"(90%)	×	2'55"	×	25
T12	Lines and rows	Grade 3	37	41'20"	34' (82.5%)	7'20"	×	×	9
T13	Lines and rows	Grade 3	44	41'00"	36'16"(88.2%)	×	×	4'44"(2)	67
T14	Lines and rows	Grade 4	48	37'00"	29'44(79.6%)	1'38"	1'40	3'58"(3)	26
T15	Lines and rows	Grade 4	40	41'00"	35'30"(86.1%)	×	5'30"	×	27
T16	Groups	Grade 4	53	41'00"	36'48"(89%)	30"	3'42"(2)	×	75
T17	Lines and rows	Grade 5	53	41'40"	37'05(89.5%)	4'35"(2)	×	×	32
T18	Groups	Grade 6	50	41'00"	30'45"(75%)	×	10'15" (2)	×	13

6.3.4.2 Whole-class activity types

Table 6.5 below presents the kinds of whole-class activities found in the lessons observed. It revealed that the kinds of whole class work conducted in these lessons were not confined to conventional T-fronted whole-class teaching with the teacher transmitting knowledge or providing explanations. Instead, they were in many different forms participated in or attended to by the whole class guided or led by the teacher. The whole-class activities observed included teachers presenting or demonstrating new knowledge in context, questions and answers between various parties, role plays, guessing games, other games (e.g. competitions, bingo games, etc), TPR activities, pair/group presentations to the whole class, action songs and chants, word recognition activities, pupils' choral or group repetitions following the teacher or reading aloud together, writing activities, spelling activities, listening to the tape, etc. As we can see, T-led whole-class activities in this study refer to those activities led by the teacher but participated by individual pupils, pairs or groups, and the whole class, but attended to by the whole class although different teachers seem to have used a different combination of these activities.

6.3.4.3. Types of interactions during whole-class work

With various activities taking place in whole-class work, the interaction patterns of whole-class activities are therefore not confined to the teacher interacting with the whole class (T-SS) all the time but also include teachers interacting with individual pupils (T-S) or a group of pupils (T-Ss), one individual pupil interacting with another individual pupil (S-S), an individual pupil interacting with the whole class (S-SS) or a group of pupils (S-Ss), and also one group of pupils interacting with another group of pupils (Ss-Ss). In the following we will take a closer look at the activities and interaction patterns of two lessons which had 100 per cent and 97.5 per cent of the class time on whole-class activities (T3's and T8's lessons).

Table 6.5 Types of whole-class work observed

No.	Grade Level	Class size	Whole class work	T presenting/demo new knowledge	Qs & As	Role plays	Hands on	Guessing games	Other games	Pair presentation	Group presentation	TPR	Action songs and chants (B) Beginning (M) Middle (E) Ending	Repetitions 1=a few 2=moderate 3=a lot	Word recognition	Spelling	Writing	Listening to the tape	Read/say aloud together	Read aloud Individually.
T1	Grade 1	40	75.5%	√	√	×	√	×	√	×	×	√	(B) (M)	2	√	√	×	√	√	×
T2	Grade 1	24	82%	√	√	√	×	√	×	×	√	×	(B) (E)	1	√	×	×	√	√	×
T3	Grade 1	22	100%	√	√	×	√	√	√	×	×	√	(M) (E)	1	√	×	×	×	×	×
T4	Grade 1	40	96%	√	√	×	×	√	√	√	×	√	(B) (E)	3	√	×	×	√	×	×
T5	Grade 2	44	91%	√	√	×	√	√	√	√	√	√	(B) (E)	2	√	×	×	×	×	×
T6	Grade 2	51	90.2%	√	√	×	√	√	√	√	×	√	(B)	1	√	×	×	×	√	×
T7	Grade 2	50	82.5%	√	√	×	√	√	×	×	×	×	(M)	1	√	×	√	√	√	√
T8	Grade 2	40	97.5%	√	√	×	×	√	×	√	×	×	(B)	3	×	×	×	√	×	×
T9	Grade 3	48	86%	√	√	×	×	×	√	×	×	√	(B) (M) (E)	1	√	√	√	√	×	×
T10	Grade 3	40	84.2%	√	√	√	×	×	√	×	×	×	(B)	1	√	√	√	√	√	×
T11	Grade 3	40	91%	√	√	√	×	√	×	×	×	×	×	1	√	√	√	×	√	×
T12	Grade 3	37	82.5%	√	√	×	×	√	×	×	×	√	(B) (M)	3	√	×	×	×	√	×
T13	Grade 3	44	88.2%	√	√	×	×	√	√	×	×	×	(B)	2	√	√	×	√	√	×
T14	Grade 4	48	79.6%	√	√	×	×	×	×	√	√	√	(E)	2	√	√	×	√	√	×
T15	Grade 4	40	86.1%	√	√	×	×	√	√	×	√	√	(B) (M)	3	×	√	×	√	√	×
T16	Grade 4	53	89%	√	√	×	×	×	×	√	√	×	(B) (E)	1	√	×	×	×	×	×
T17	Grade 5	53	89.5%	√	√	√	×	√	√	√	×	×	×	1	√	×	×	√	√	×
T18	Grade 6	50	76%	√	√	√	×	×	√	×	√	×	×	×	×	×	√	×	×	√

T3 (Grade 1) who spent 100 per cent of her class time (29'30") on whole-class work did the following activities after she greeted the class:

	T-led whole-class activities (T3, Grade 1)	**Interaction Patterns**
1′40″	A child introduced himself to the whole class while other children listened;	S-SS
2′30″	T invited children to ask and answer any questions they wanted to;	T-SS; S-S
4′45″	Each child took turns to speak to 'Tobby' (a puppet tiger), by holding it, whatever they wanted/were able to say, then passing it on to the next child.	T-SS; S-Puppet
6′30″	An action chant following the video shown to the class;	SS
7′45″	T presented new language structure 'Do you have a…?' by asking a child to touch and guess what was inside a school bag. When the child took something out the teacher asked the child: 'Do you have a …?' and invited the whole class to ask the same question. The child then answered with 'Yes, I do' with the T's help. This was done with a few other children;	T-SS; T-S; SS-S
11′10″	The whole class repeated the structure 'Do you have …?' according to the objects the T holds in her hand;	T-SS
13′00″	A word recognition game (T holds word card, children say it out loud and make one step forward. When T holds a picture of a tiger, children should run back to the beginning place;	T-SS
16′00″	Hands-on activity: T took out a word card and asks children 'Do you have a …?' Children were to find the object from their own school bags and show it or say 'No, I don't.'	T-SS; T-S
19′00″	T questioned individual children, 'How many pencils (etc.) do you have?' Children came up with many different answers;	T-S
20′20″	Some repetitions following the teacher	T-SS
20'30"	TPR activity: stand up, sit down, hands up, hands down, arm in arm, etc. And an action chant: 'you have one; I have one, one little child…'	T-SS; SS
22′49″	A game: T had five strings connected to five objects but tangled together. The teacher invited five children to hold the end of each string and then asked the whole class to guess who had what. Then the whole class was to find out which child had which object by untangling the strings. And the whole class say their findings together;	T-Ss; T-SS
27′30″	A song.	SS

The following is another example illustrating the middle phase of the lesson given by T8 (Grade 2) who spent 97.5% of her class time (30'30") on whole-class teaching. She organised the following activities after a short formal greeting, a chant and a song together.

Teacher-led whole-class activities (T8 Grade 2)	Interaction patterns
0′00″ A song and a chant	SS
1′55″ Teacher presented the new language structure 'How many birds are there?' with a large screen picture and had children count the numbers and answer 'There are two birds'.	T-SS
3′00″ Children repeated after the T as a whole class;	T-SS
3′40″ Individuals and whole class repeated after the teacher;	T-S ;T-SS
4′28″ T showed different pictures, half class asked and the other half answered and then exchanged roles using the new structure just presented;	Ss-Ss
6′11″ T encouraged individual children to ask & answer questions in front of the whole class with picture cues shown on a large screen;	S/S -SS
9′00″ T showed a picture and then invited individual children to act as Mocky (a familiar character from the textbook) to ask their own questions to the whole class. Children came up with questions such as' what's this?' 'What are these?' T invited the whole class to correct mistakes and gave help when needed. Then she modeled to elicit the question 'how many..?' followed by 1'40" pair practice.	T-S; T-SS S-S
12′20″ T used both large screen pictures and real objects to invite more questions and answers from different pairs of children. T also invited the whole class to count together and verify the answers when answers given by children differ;	T- S/S; T-SS
22′50″ T showed a multimedia story about animals and invited children to think about any questions they could ask, and, when a child made a mistake, T asked the whole class to make a judgement.	T-SS; T-S
25′45″ T showed the story again and stopped from time to time to invite children to ask questions. Children individually came up with many questions and some were unexpected. T then guided the whole class to count the numbers for the correct answer. A child corrected the T when he found that there was a mistake made by the teacher in counting the numbers.	T-SS; T-S

From what was illustrated above, we can find that both lessons had some topic related vocabulary and structures to be taught and both teachers employed a variety of whole-class activities in order to achieve their targets. During these whole-class activities, we can see that interactions between the teacher to the whole class and the teacher to individual pupils constitute the main pattern of interactions. However, the two lessons also exemplified and illustrated some other organisational variants of classroom interaction between individual pupils and the whole class, the whole class and individual pupils, pairs asking and answering questions in front of the whole class, group to group interaction in question and answers, as well as whole class singing, chanting, and acting.

From the lesson transcripts (see Appendix 16 Example 2), we can find that when T3 gave children opportunities to ask questions freely to other children (2'30" – 4'45"), they came up with questions like 'What colour do you like?' 'How are you?' 'What's your telephone number?' and 'Do you like snakes?' etc. Also, when children were invited to say something to their 'friend' - a puppet tiger, they produced many different outputs, ranging from a very simple greeting such as 'Hello, Tobby!' and 'How are you, Tobby?' to something more sophisticated such as 'Tobby, you are strong!' and 'Do you like toys, Tobby?' Similarly, in the game (22'49"-27'30"), the T created an information gap for practicing 'so-and-so has a pen/glue/book' as nobody knew for sure who had what object with entangled strings. The whole class first made a guess and then the teacher helped disentangle the strings to reveal who had what. Children were all excited to find out and say who had what at the end of the game. Such open-ended activities not only maintained children's interest and motivation but also allowed children to use what they learned for meaningful communication instead of simply repeating what the teacher wanted them to say. Although children in this class were just grade 1 kids and had very limited knowledge of English, they seemed to be quite capable and comfortable with English and were able not just to produce single English words but sentences in meaningful contexts.

For T8, the new structure was also presented in context but there were more mechanical repetitions of the new structures by the children following the teacher. However, the teacher gradually handed over the opportunities to children for them to ask questions based on a story context and children came up with many unexpected questions. For example, instead of asking 'how many dogs are there?' one child asked 'how many mummy dogs are there?' Then another asked 'how many baby dogs are there?' The whole class then counted and answered together 'There are one, two, three, five, six, six baby dogs and one mummy dog'.

The whole-class activities examined above were well paced and seemed to have quite effectively and efficiently promoted learning. The activities encouraged whole-class participation, group participation as well as individual participation intended to achieve a common goal for every child in class. But how do teachers cater for individuality in whole-class teaching? The following is what T1 says about her way as well as her puzzles in dealing with this problem.

> In the new English curriculum, an important principle is to promote individuality. I am also seeking ways to do this and I do not really know how to do it well. I think in my lessons, uniformity is still more prevalent than individuality, because I have more than 40 children in the class. I need to help everyone to meet the learning requirements. So before every class, I go over in my mind all the children, their individual faces and level of English. I would plan in my mind at what stage I should involve what level of the learners. Sometimes, there are too many children and I cannot remember who has participated. So in class, when I couldn't remember who hasn't participated, I would ask my pupils and they would tell me. (T1, Individual interview, 27-April-2005)

6.3.4.4 The teaching of grammar and vocabulary in context

As regards the teaching of language knowledge, it was found that there was almost no explicit explanation of grammar in any of the lessons observed. Instead, new grammatical structures were presented and practised based on structures that children already learned and in meaningful and interesting contexts. Also various kinds of visual aids were used with a variety of activities for children to practise the structures mechanically first and then more meaningfully with the teacher playing the role of a knowledge provider and a guide. The following gives a few more instances of teacher-led whole-class activities from which we can examine how grammatical structures and vocabulary are presented and practised.

T5 was trying to teach the new structure 'What are these?' 'They are …' with some vegetable words. She started to teach the new structure using some familiar words. When the structure was reasonably established, she started to introduce new vocabulary with the structure. She presented the new structure with a guessing game. The following transcript is taken from the 4th minute of the lesson (see Excerpt 6).

In teaching the new structure, the teacher did not explain the difference between singular and plural question or noun forms, but created a meaningful context to present and practise them. She elicited from the children the plural of nouns and reinforced the understanding and the correct use of the forms with more questions and answers. She also encouraged children to learn to use the structure to ask questions. In a similar manner she taught other new words such as onions, eggplants, cauliflowers, and cucumbers. Children were given different vegetables and then were asked to exchange their vegetables with one another in groups of four to ask and answer questions before exchanging them.

Excerpt 6 (T5, Grade 2)

T. Ok! Look!
SS. Wow! (showing surprise)
T. A basket, a vegetable basket. It is so colourful. So colourful, is that right?
SS. Yes!
T. Ok. Jenny. (Her eyes were blindfolded with a piece of cloth) What are these? Touch and guess. What are these?
S6. They are (..) peppers.
T. Is that right?
SS. Yes!
T. They are ... (T writes the question and answer on the bb).
SS Peppers.
T. Peppers. (Children repeat after the T 3 times)
T. What are these? What are these? Wang Ran
S7. They are pepper.
T. They are peppers. They are red...
SS. peppers.
T. They are red peppers. Here. (T holds a few red peppers children repeat after the T three more times).
T. One ...
SS. One pepper (repeat after the T 2 more times)
T. Two peppers (T holding two peppers). Four (.)
SS. Peppers (Repeat after the T 2 more times).
T. What are these?
SS. They are peppers.
T. Ok, who has peppers? Who has peppers?
OK. Who has peppers?
S8. They are peppers. (holding his peppers)
T. OK. Good! Who has peppers?
S9. They are peppers. (holding his peppers)
T. Good. Can you ask?
S9. They are peppers. (holding his peppers)
T. OK, good. Can you ask?
S10. What are these?
T. Ok, you , please.
S11. They are peppers.
T. Good. You, please.
S12. They are peppers.
T. You, please.
S13. They are peppers.
T. They are peppers. OK. Who has pepper? Who can ask? (Repeated again). Can you ask? Try to ask in English.
S14 What are these?
S15. They are peppers.

What we can find is that children are learning language through experience, by focusing on meaning first in context followed by practice on the form, which is clearly an intended innovation towards LAMP/LC.

6.3.4.5 Integrating the training of learning strategies with learning contents

The following is a short transcript exemplifying how the development of vocabulary learning strategies is integrated with the practice of newly learned vocabulary. We have seen part of T1's lesson presented in Excerpt 4 in 6.3.3.1 from which we knew that she was teaching clothes names. Excerpt 7 below illustrated how she managed to get Grade 1 children involved in learning new vocabulary. After she presented the new word 'sweater' and children repeated after her a few times, she found that some children had problems pronouncing 'sweater'. Instead of asking each child to repeat after her mechanically, which was common practice in traditional classrooms, she told children that she had a problem with her pronunciation; she modeled the wrong pronunciation and invited children to help her correct it. Children were all eager to point out the mistake and one child pointed out the problem in Chinese. T agreeingly repeated the child's answer and then asked the class to work in pairs to check each other's pronunciation. By doing so, children's learning behaviours

changed from passively repeating after the teacher to actively engage in observing, discovering, thinking, experiencing, and assessing. She also tried to help children to develop their own ways of remembering newly learned words. See Excerpt 7 below.

Excerpt 7 (T1, Grade 1)

T. Look. The teacher is making a mistake. How is she saying 'sweater'? /sv ɛ t ɛ /, /sv ɛ t ɛ /.

Ss. *Teacher has her teeth on her lower lip**. (Children shouting out answers in Chinese)

T. Right. The teacher has made a mistake. I was wrong. Now, I am going to correct myself. Follow me. Sweater, sweater.

Ss. Sweater, sweater. (The whole class repeated a few more times and the teacher also checked with a few individual pupils).

T. Now, work with your neighbours. Check with each other.

[After presenting and practising all the new words, the T asked children to look very carefully of two newly learned words 'skirt' and 'shorts'].

……

T. Now, a question for you. Listen. *You observe very carefully. There are two words that they sound alike and they also look alike, skirt and shorts. Who can help me to find their differences?*

S29. *Their endings are different. 'Skirt' has no 's', 'shorts' has an 's'.*

S30. *One is shorter, one is longer.*

T. *Which is shorter? Which is longer?*

S30. 'Skirt' *is shorter*, 'shorts' *is longer*.

[T then encourages different observations]

S31. *The second letter of 'skirt' is 'k' and the second letter of shorts is 'h'.*

T: [She repeated the answer to the class] *I think we all have our own ways to distinguish them, not necessarily the same way. I will tell you how I make the difference. You don't have to follow my way. You may have your own ways. But this can be one way for your reference. 'Shorts' have two legs, therefore, an 's' at the beginning and (.)*{ *an 's' at the end.* / *an 's' at the end.*

Ss:

T. *Very good. Of course, you can have your own ways.*

In the above excerpt, we could see that T1 modeled and guided children to learn through discovery and engaged them in learning by themselves instead of forcing them to simply repeat after the teacher. Similar to what T1 did to help children develop learning strategies, T2 (Grade 1) also did more than just teaching the new words. In her lesson, she presented the structure 'what do you like?' 'I like…' and vocabulary related to food and drinks in Mrs. Sheep's shop. After presenting and practising the structure and the new words of food and drinks, T2 drew two big

* Italics = in Chinese

circles on the blackboard and wrote the two headings 'Food' and 'Drinks' on top of each circle and then asked children to help Mrs. Sheep to put the food and drinks into the right circles. A few children were invited to do it in front of the whole class. Then, the teacher checked each word with the whole class to see if they had classified them correctly. This activity provided children the opportunity not only to develop concepts of classifications but also strategies to remember words by grouping them into their relevant categories.

The following are what two teachers said about the values of helping children to develop learning strategies.

> I think helping primary children to develop learning strategies is very important. If we can do so from the low grade of primary school, they are going to develop continuously. The teacher's ability to do so is also very important. (TD, Group Discussion 7-March 2005)

> I think for learning a foreign language in the primary phase, knowledge *per se* is not the most important. What are important are their interests and their awareness of learning strategies. I believe primary teachers should teach children how to learn, for example, how to remember vocabulary and how to learn grammar. ..Simply memorizing a few more words or being able to say a few sentences are not the most important. Once they have had the interests and the ways of learning, will they be able to learn efficiently and effectively. (T18, Group interview, 31-March-2005).

The examples above illustrate that some elements of learning to learn were integrated into the teaching and learning processes and many teachers are aware of the importance of helping children to develop effective strategies for learning. Other instances of strategy training also include 'being a good listener' (T1), 'be attentive and learn with concentration' (T1, T3), opportunities for cooperative group work are found most clearly in T2's, T16's and T18' lessons. What needs to be pointed out is that metacognitive strategy training is not present in the lessons observed.

6.3.4.6 The role and function of whole-class repetitions

Repetition is a common technique used by almost all the teachers in whole-class teaching. It was observed that repetition was done most often after the teacher presented a new structure or a new word or after presenting all the new words. However, some teachers were found to have relied on repetitions more heavily then others, e.g. T4, T8, T12, and T15. It was also found that the natures of repetitions were different. Some were more mechanical and others were less mechanical. The

following provides three examples of repetitions used by three different teachers. They are T3, T12 and T16.

Excerpt 8 (T3, Grade 1)

After the T presented the structure 'Do you have a …?' in a meaningful context, she had children repeat after her the structure two more times. Then, she took out some objects from a bag one at a time for children to say it in English out loud for practising of vocabulary. Then she dumped all the objects on the floor and picked up one at a time in her hand and signaled children to follow her.

T. Do you have a (.)⌈ pen?
SS. ⌊ a pen?
(T took up another object and children were to substitute it for the same question)
T. Do you (.) (Holding up a ruler, a book, a pencil case, and an apple one by one)
SS. Do you have a ruler?
SS. Do you have a book?
SS Do you have pencil-case?
SS. Do you have an apple?

T12 presented the new language items 'behind', 'beside', 'in front of', and 'between', using positions of objects as well as herself and her pupils. After she presented each item, she let her children repeat after her individually, in groups, and also as a whole class. This took up quite a lot of her class time. See Excerpt 9.

Excerpt 9 (T12, Grade 3)

T: Now, follow me. Behind.
SS. Behind. (Repeat after the T 3 more times)
T. Behind the teacher.
SS Behind the teacher (Repeated after the T three more times)
T. Behind
SS. Behind.
T. Behind ↗
SS. Behind↗
T. behind↘
SS. behind↘
T. Behind the teacher.
SS Behind the teacher (Repeated after the T once again)
T. Where is Liu Xinyue?
SS. She is behind the teacher.
T. Behind the teacher.
SS. Behind the teacher.

T. Behind
SS. Behind.
T. Behind↗
SS. Behind↗
T. Behind↘
SS. Behind↘ (Repeated after the T 3 more times)
T. Behind the teacher.
SS. Behind the teacher. (Repeated after the T again)
T. Where is Liu Xinyue?
SS. She is behind the teacher.
T. Where is Liu Xinyue?
Ss1. Behind the teacher.
T. Where is Liu Xinyue?
Ss2. Behind the teacher.
T. Where is Liu Xinyue? (Repeated after the T by three more groups)

T16's lesson is about the life in a castle 800 years ago. The main language items to be learned and practised are past tense in its interrogative and negative forms along with some vocabulary of household gadgets. After some questions and answers about how people lived during those years, T wrote on the blackboard another new structure: Did people have... then? No, they didn't. (There is a big projected picture of an old castle with the life style portrayed inside the castle).

Excerpt 10 (T16, Grade 4)

T. Now, can you ask more questions using this structure on the bb?
S37. Did they have electric stove then?
S38. Did people have refrigerators then?
T. Now repeat after me. Did people have electric light then?
SS. Did people have electric light then?
T. No, they didn't.
SS. No, they didn't.
T. Did people have electric stoves then?
SS. Did people have electric stoves then?
T. No, they didn't.
SS. No they didn't.
[The same repetition went on with 'bath tubs' and 'refrigerators']
T. Now, can you ask more questions?
S41. Did people have telephones then?
S42. Did people have airplanes then?
S43. Did people have televisions then?
S44. Did people have computers then?
S45. Did people have washing machines then?
S46. Did people have (xxx) then?

The three excerpts above illustrated some instances of repetitions taking place in language lessons. We can find that although they were all teacher-led whole-class or individual repetitions, which seemed to be a necessary technique to help children internalise the new structures and vocabulary, they were done somehow differently. In Excerpt 8, T3 used limited mechanical repetitions – repeating exactly what the teacher said. By using different objects as cues she managed to elicit different responses based on the same structure. In this way, she made the repetition more meaningful. In the interview she expressed her views about repetitions. She said that there was no need to have children repeat so many times. What was important was to create meaningful context for them to use what they learned. 'If you learn something but with no opportunity to use them, you are likely to forget them'. T12 in Excerpt 9, on the other hand, did more choral repetition with the whole class although she tried

to create a classroom realia for meaningful practice but the context was monotonous which also made the repetition monotonous. In her self-reflection about her lesson, although she realised that she did too much repetition on the same content, she believed that repetitions helped children understand the meaning and remember the words so that they would be able to use them when asking about positions. In Excerpt 10, T16 also used repetitions to help children learn the new structures but she allowed more space for children to ask their own questions using the same structure and vocabulary learned, making the practice of the structures more meaningful, motivating and personalised. Children's own contributions became also meaningful input for other children, allowing individual children to construct their own meanings in the context provided.

6.3.4.7 Individual pupil participation during whole-class work

Table 6.4 also illustrates the number of children teachers nominated or who volunteered individually to participate in class activities during whole-class teaching, such as asking or answering questions, repeating or reading aloud sentences, and expressing personal ideas. The opportunities teachers gave to individual pupils to speak in class varied from 9 to 97. As the counting of individual participation does not include pair/group work and pair/group presentations to the whole class, the numbers themselves may not provide an overall picture of children's individual participation in a lesson as one of the teachers commented in a group interview:

> LAMP/LC can be found in many aspects, for example, their interest to learn, their desire to learn, their learning behaviours and performances. It is not simply counting how many times a student has had his hands up or had spoken in class. (TL, Group interview – March 7th, 2005)

However, the data showed that these teachers had different teaching styles. Some of them were keener in involving children individually while others preferred more whole-class participation. From Table 6.3 we can see that there were five teachers (T2, T5, T9, T13, T16) whose involvement of individual pupils was between approximately 67-97 times while two teachers (T12 and T18) had the least individual pupil participation, 9 and 13 times respectively. The rest of the teachers involved individual pupils at approximately 25 to 50 times. A closer examination of T12 and T18's lessons shows that T12 spent more of her class time on whole-class repetitions, giving indeed very few opportunities to individual participation in practising or using

the language learned while for T18's lesson, she spent approximately 50 per cent of her teaching time on group task and group presentations, which had in fact provided quite a lot of opportunities for individual children to interact among themselves in groups.

6.3.4.8 Attending to both the individual and the whole class

Another typical feature of interaction patterns found from the observations in whole class activities is the interplay between the teacher's attention to individual responses and involvement of the whole class for learning and evaluation. However, it is not common for teachers to engage in talks with individual pupils for more than two turns. See the following for examples.

Excerpt 11 (T4, Grade 1)

T. What are these? Guess. (Teacher holds a Puppet Monkey and hides behind it a paper bag of pictures. She takes one picture but shows only a fraction of it). Who want to try?
SS. Let me try! Let me try!
S1. Chicken, chicken, I like chicken. (The child seemed to have known a chant with the word)
T. Yes or no? (T took out the picture to show to the whole class)
SS. Yes!
T. Chicken (.)
SS. Chicken, chicken, I like chicken.
T. What are these? (T shows a fraction of another picture)
SS. Let me try! Let me try!
S2. French fries.
T. Yes or no? (T took out the picture to show to the whole class)
SS. Yes!
T. Who want to try? (T showed another picture, just a fraction of it)
S3. Pizza.
T. Yes or no? (Again she took out the picture to show to the whole class
SS. Yes!
T. Pizza …
SS. Pizza, pizza, I like pizza.

Excerpt 12 (T7, Grade 2)

(A long string of letters written on the blackboard for children to pick out some hidden words from it)

S33. Is it Kiwi fruit?
T. Kiwi fruit, yes or no?
SS. Yes!
T. Another one.
S34. Is it a nut?
T. Right?
Ss. Yes!

T. Next one.
S35. It's an orange.
T. Yes or no?
Ss. Yes!
T. The last one.
S36 It's a banana.
SS. Yes!

The pattern of interaction from the above examples showed that in whole class activities, individual participation and the whole class participation were often simultaneously attended bonding the individual with the whole class, reflecting a strong sense of collective learning and a common goal to be reached by every pupil possible. All children were expected to be attentive to and join in other children's contributions and make their judgments about what was said. Children were found following such a ritual of learning quite naturally.

6.3.4.9 Pair and group work

15 teachers used either pair or group work or both in their teaching (See Table 6.4), although they constituted only a very small proportion of the total teaching time. As far as pair work is concerned, 11 teachers used it and it was used mostly for maximizing opportunities for children to practise what was taught following the teacher's model. Here are two typical pair work tasks set by the teachers.

Excerpt 13 (T14, Grade 4)

After introducing the context of a birthday party with the new structure 'what do we need?' T14 organised some practice with both individual pupils and the whole class before letting children do pair practice.

T. Can you tell me what do we need? What do we need?
S4. We need some birthday cakes.
T. Yes, We need some birthday cakes. What else?
S5. We need some sweets.
T. We need some sweets. Anything else? What do we need for the birthday party?
S6. We need some orange juice.
T. What do we need for the birthday party?
S7. We need some…we need some… cakes.
T. Ok. We need some cakes. What do we need for the birthday party?
S8. We need some orange juice.
T Ok. What do we need?
S9. We need some gifts
S10. We need some bread.
T. xxx, what do we need?
S11. We need some pizza.
T. Now you ask the question. One two go!
SS. What do we need?
T. We need some orange juice.
SS. What do we need?
T. We need some chips.
SS. What do we need?
T. We need some chicken.
SS. What do we need?
T We need some bread.
SS. What do we need?
T We need some orange.
T. Understand? Now practice in pairs.

The following excerpt shows how T10 modeled a card game before asking children to practise in pairs.

Excerpt 14 (T10, Grade 3)

(The newly presented structures are 'Do you have …?' 'Can I have this one, please?' and 'Here you are').

T. Look, what are they? (T takes out some cards) They are cards. Who can help me? Who can help me? Nelson, please. Listen carefully. Now listen carefully.
T. Do you have a T-shirt?
S13. Yes, I do (taking out a card from his pile).
T. Can I have this one, please?
S13. Here you are. (Two more children played the card games with the T)
T. Do you understand? Now you work in pairs using your own cards. Remember if you don't have something, you may say No, I don't. Now, begin!

As Excerpts 13 and 14 demonstrated, pair work activities normally followed teacher's demonstrations and modeling of the new language structures. At the surface level, children simply needed to repeat what was demonstrated, but at the deeper level, it involved a cognitive transformation of knowledge and skills from understanding of a new language to production - a cognitively demanding task for a language learner to experience using another language to express meaning. It involves developing both concepts of knowledge and skills of the new language and ways of interaction.

Besides pair work, 9 teachers also organised group work. The tasks include (1) give commands to other children in the group using the structure and vocabulary newly introduced (T1), e.g. Stand up if you like the yellow T-shirt; (2) work in groups to create a new chant for Mrs. Sheep's food and drinks shop (T2); (3) work together to prepare a role play e.g. a shopping activity (T2 & T11); (4) a collaborative writing task based on given pictures or topics (T10 & T18)); (5) practise a dialogue following the T's model (T14); (6) make a plan for seven days about what they will do (T15). (7) Children walk around the classroom to do interviews (T2 & T6). It was found that in these group work tasks, there was more space for children to be creative, interactive, and cooperative compared with pair work. However, how interactions or creativity actually evolved and developed within group work is beyond the scope of this study. For example, in a shopping activity, T11 set up four stores e.g. a toy store, a stationery store, a food store, etc. and appointed four managers to sell their products. Children were allowed to walk to different stores to do their shopping by using the structures and vocabulary learned from the lesson. Similarly, T6 asked

her pupils to do an interview task using the structure 'When is your birthday?' to interview any other children they wanted to find out in which month their birthdays were.

What is also interesting to note is that there do not seem to be any relations between the classroom layout and the amount of pair/group work among the lessons observed. Both T4 and T8 had their classrooms arranged in groups, they did not organise any group work but only very brief pair work. Most of the other lessons with children sitting in lines and rows organised either pair or group work. Seating arrangements, therefore, do not seem to have affected how teachers organised classroom activities and the patterns of classroom interaction.

6.3.5 Features of classroom questioning

No one can deny the importance of questioning in the classroom. Teachers use questions to prepare children for new concepts, develop their understanding, assess their learning, and also evaluate their own teaching. Questioning, according to Wragg and Brown (2001) 'lies at the heart of successful teaching' as children's 'thinking and learning can be improved significantly if they have the opportunity to respond to teachers' questions and enjoy the process of interactions with them' (p.1). However, a thorough study of teachers' questioning strategies is clearly beyond the scope of the current study as the focus of the study is to identify LAMP/LC features of classroom teaching in general with questioning as only one aspect. Therefore, the following will provide a brief overview of the features of classroom questioning including both teachers' questions and pupils' questions.

Regarding the classification of questions, different researchers have come up with different categories. According to Kerry (1998), a relatively common way is to divide the questions into open and closed ones. An open question permits a range of responses while a closed question implies that the teacher has a predetermined 'correct' answer already in mind. Another classification is to divide questions into low and higher order categories. Low order questions refer to questions intended for management purposes, questions that require recalling or simple comprehension of facts; while higher order questions include questions that require application of knowledge, analysis and synthesis as well as evaluation of information. Also, Barnes *et al* (1986) categorised teachers' questions into four broad types: factual questions, which has a single right answer; reasoning questions, which draw on logical or

sequential thought; open questions, to which there is no anticipated right answer; and social questions, which invite children to share their experiences or allow the teacher to control the class. There are of course other kinds of classifications but it is noticed that all classification systems are potentially flawed because they neglect contextual factors (Kerry, 1998). Also, Beck (1998) critically comments that classification of questions are often created theoretically and intended to be applied to practice rather than being taken from practice. For this reason, the analysis of both teachers' and pupils' questions started from observation transcripts to find out what questions teachers and pupils actually asked and what their functions were.

6.3.5.1 Teacher questioning

Myhill, Jones, and Hopper (2006:17) note that 'whole class teaching draws heavily on the teachers' skill in questioning, as questioning remains the most common strategy for eliciting responses from children during a whole class teaching episode'. Unlike most social contexts where people ask questions in order to establish something they don't know, questioning in school is a very particular kind, where teachers predominantly ask questions to which they know the answers.

To analyse teachers' questions, questions asked by the 18 teachers were firstly counted and then examined in order to develop practical categories for classification. It was felt that using open and closed or low order and higher order categories over-simplifies the functions of questions in a language classroom. The reason is that questions in a foreign language classroom for young learners are more subtle and complex to classify than questions in other contexts as they are inevitably constrained by both the language to be learned and the skills to be developed. By examining the lesson transcripts, it was found that similar to all other research, it was the teachers who asked most of the questions. Among the questions teachers asked there emerged six categories: (1) Routine questions – questions that teachers often ask at the beginning of a lesson such as 'What day is it today?' 'What is the weather like today?' etc. (2) Managerial questions – questions for sustaining interactions, maintaining order, and setting up tasks. E.g. 'Who wants to try?' and 'Do you remember the song?' or 'Are you ready for class?' 'Do you want to talk to him? Say something. Understand?' 'Let's see more pictures, OK?' etc. (3) Checking and assessing questions – questions for checking the correctness of answers or general attitudes, e.g. Yes or no? Is that right? Do you think so? Are you happy today? (4)

Recall or memory questions – questions for checking memorisation or mastery of previous knowledge, especially after listening/reading comprehension tasks; (5) Situated questions – questions as content of learning presented and practised in context, e.g. 'How many birds are there?' 'There are three birds' or 'What are these?' 'They are strawberries' or 'Do you have a pen' 'Yes, I do.' 'No, I don't.' and 'What do you like?' 'I like noodles.' 'Do you like pizza?' 'Yes, I do' or 'No, I don't'. In such cases, teachers ask questions in order to teach the forms of questions and answers instead of seeking real information or knowledge from children; however, once the structures are presented, they may be used to seek information and the same questions may become higher order questions; (6) Higher order questions – questions that require application of knowledge, intended for seeking information, understanding, knowledge, attitudes and encouraging imagination and creative use of the language, e.g. 'why' questions, questions requiring guessing meaning, questions inviting imagination and synthesis of information. It also includes those questions which after they are presented and practised, they are used to seek unknown information from the children. For a summary of teachers' questions observed in the 18 lessons, please refer to Appendix 22.

The teachers' questions were addressed to either the whole class or individual pupils and children were sometimes nominated but most times they bid for answers. As far as the 18 lessons were concerned, situated questions were the most frequently asked questions. In other words, for quite a number of the lessons, such questions themselves are the content of learning. The second most frequently asked questions are managerial questions. These types of questions are in fact very important for maintaining the pace of teaching and for sustaining interactions. They also serve as meaningful and authentic language input for children who have little opportunity to hear English outside the classroom. In fact, examining questions simply by looking at the crude numbers is an over-simplistic way of studying questions. As far as EFL to young learners is concerned, the number of managerial and situated questions will naturally outnumber higher order questions as children's linguistic knowledge of the new language is far behind their cognitive level of development. Therefore, their linguistic knowledge needs to develop first before they can use it for higher order thinking and learning. Again, number is not the most crucial. Sometimes, one or two good higher-order questions can lead to very effective learning but they obviously need to be built on low order questions such as situated, recall and memory questions.

As far as situated questions are concerned, T2 and T12 asked the most situated questions. However it is found that the questions they asked are often the same questions but again and again with T2 asking the questions mostly to individual pupils and T12 mostly to the whole class. For T6, T15 and T18, the contents of learning are not strictly interrogative structures. Therefore, very few or none situated questions were found in their lessons. The following are three excerpts with Excerpt 15 illustrating situated questions and Excerpt 16 and 17 higher-order questions.

Excerpt 15 (T1, Grade 1)

T. I have a lot of 'clothes' here. (T shows some pictures of different kinds of clothes).
SS. Wow (showing surprise and interest)
T. I know 'skirt', what clothes do you know?
S1. I know [xx]
T. Louder, please.
S1. I know a cap.
T. Thank you, David.
S2. I know 'T-shirt'.
T. Oh, you know 'T-shirt'.
S3. I know 'jacket'.
T. Good job, Benson. Very loud voice! Joe?
S4.I know (..) jacket.
T. Oh, you know jacket, too.

Excerpt 16 (T6, Grade 2)

T. Now, what's your favourite month? (Repeated three times)
S1. My favourite month is April.
T. Why?
S1. April is my birthday.
T. OK. Your birthday is in April, right?
T. What's her favourite month?
Ss. Her favourite month is April.
T. What's your favourite month?
S2. My favourite month is June.
T. Why?
S2. Because it's Children's Day.
T. Oh, because children's day is in June.
T. What is your favourite month?
S3. My favourite month is January.
T. Why?
S3. Because my father's birthday is in January.
T. You know what is my favourite month? Guess.
S4. January?
T. January? No.
S5. April?
T. Yes, of course. My favourite month is April.
SS. Why? (Children start to imitate the same question T has asked them.)

T. Do you know why?
S6. It's your birthday!
T. Yes. My birthday is in April so I like April very much.

Excerpt 17 (T16, Grade 4)

T. OK. We talked about life 800 years ago. What about our life? How do you go to school? What do you eat for lunch? Harry?
Harry: I go to school by horse. (The whole class laughed.)
T. By horse? I go to school by bicycle?
S66. (Harry). I go to school by bike or car.
T. OK.
S67. After school I watch TV at home.
S68. (xxx)
S69. At night I have a bath in the bath-tub.
S70. I can eat food from the refrigerator.
S71. I can talk to many people on the telephone (with T's help).
…
T. This is a robot invented in Japan (T shows a picture of a young boy- a real robot). It has changed our world today. If you can, what do you want to invent to change the world?
S72. I want to invent a time machine (.) and (not clear) because (xxx)
T. Well, a time machine to slow time down?
S73. I want to invent a teacher machine.
T. A teacher machine (with surprise)? Why?
S73. Because teachers are very tired. It can help teachers teach.
T. Thank you, thank you, Peter. Clap hands for him.
S74. ((inaudible)
S75. I want invent good friends.
T OK, you want to have more good friends. We all need good friends, don't we? (Children spontaneously clapped hands for the answer given).

As we can see, when teachers' questions are open-ended, they tend to give more space for children's thinking and imaginations as well as opportunities for children to relate to their life experiences within the language limit they have. As the above examples showed, children exemplified more creativity and originality in their responses to higher order questions. What is more, when higher order questions were asked, the whole class was found more engaged in listening with interest and thinking about the answers as well.

6.3.5.2 Pupil questioning

Most teachers would agree that pupil questions are important and should be valued. However, research consistently demonstrates that it is always the teacher who asks most of the questions while pupil questions are mostly absent from classrooms. As there have been so few of them, researchers have not yet found enough student questions to systematically classify them (Dillon, 1988 in Beck, 1998). In the current

study however, 16 out of 18 teachers have been observed giving children opportunities to ask questions and the number of questions asked by children ranged from 3 to 33. However, the questions children asked are most often not initiated by children but elicited/solicited by the teacher, and confined to the content of the lessons. In other words, the kinds of questions pupils asked are mostly situated in a specific context for a specific pedagogic purpose. They are not genuine questions by pupils to challenge, to seek information, to ask for clarification or explanation, but often for learning and practising interrogative structures or for reviewing learned vocabulary and structures, e.g. children were invited to ask questions in a guessing game, e.g. children were blindfolded and then did 'touch and guess' by asking questions or teacher hid an object and invited children to ask questions about where it was. 12 teachers out 18 used guessing games and invited a lot of questions from the pupils. The following summarises the main activity forms used by the teachers to invite pupil questions with some transcripts to illustrate them:

- 'Question time': There is a special routine in some classes during which time any student can ask any questions to anybody for a few minutes (2 teachers used this).
- Children ask and answer questions using cues provided by the teacher.
- Information gap activities, role-plays, interviewing, and guessing games in which children need to ask questions to do the tasks.
- T creates a context to invite questions from the children.

Excerpt 18 (T7, Grade2)

T. Look. I have something for you. What's this? Let's have a look. (T takes out something rapped in a small box) Is it a car?
S17. No, it isn't.
T. It's small.
S18. Is it a strawberry?
T. Is it a strawberry? (T correcting intonation)
S18. Is it a strawberry?
T. No, it isn't. Who can try? Who can try?
S19. Is it an eraser?
T. No, it isn't. It's not an eraser. It's a pencil sharpener.
T. Now, another gift. What's this? Come on! Guess.
S20. Is it a strawberry?
S21. Is it a pear?
T. No, it isn't.
S22. Is it a watermelon?
T. Watermelon? No, it isn't.
S23. Is it a banana?
T. No, no, it isn't.

S23. What colour?
T. It's yellow. It's yellow.
S24. Is it an orange?
T. Let's look.
SS Ah, it's an orange. (Children were all very excited and enjoyed it)

Excerpt 19 (T5, Grade 2)

T. OK. Good! Who has peppers?
S9. They are peppers (holding his peppers)
T. Good. Can you ask?
S9. They are peppers (holding his peppers)
T. OK, good. Can you ask?
S9. What are these?
T. Ok, you, please.
S10. They are peppers.
…
T. They are peppers. OK. Who has pepper? Who can ask? Who can ask? Can you ask? Try to ask in English.
S14. What are these?
S15. They are peppers.
T. Good! Who can ask? You please.
S16. What are these?
S17. These are (..) peppers.

Excerpt 20 (T16, Grade 4)

T. …805 years ago. We are going to talk about life in the past. Now, let's look at the Castle. Do you have any questions about the life then? Any questions? Harry.
S21. How did they cook? (T repeats the question and nominates a pupil who raised his hand)
S22. They cooked by open fire.
T. Oh, they cooked by open fire. Any more questions?
S23. How did they a have a bathroom?
T. Have a bath. OK. (T explains and presents two new words 'wooden tub' and 'bathtub')
T. Any more questions?
S24. How did they travel?
S25. They traveled by horse.
T. Yes, very good! Any more questions?
S28. How did they eat?
S29. They ate by hand.
S30. Why do they use candles?
S31. Because they had no electric light.

Although a majority of the teachers gave pupils opportunities to ask questions and children were observed enjoying asking more than answering questions, an examination of the number of questions children asked in the lessons differed to a large extent and the ratio between teachers' and pupils' questions for some teachers is also wide except in cases of T5, T6, T7, T8, T11 and T16. Again, although numbers

of questions children asked may reflect, to a certain degree, children's active participation in the lessons, numbers themselves may not be the most important. It depends on what types of questions children asked, whether they asked questions only required by the teacher or also questions of their own. However, the type of questions children asked is beyond the scope of this study. See Table 6.6 for only numbers and ratios of teacher and pupil questions.

Table 6.6 Numbers of teachers' and pupils' questions compared

Ts	TQ	PQ	Ratio	Ts	TQ	PQ	Ratio
T1	29	3	10%	T10	48	5	10%
T2	61	4	7%	T11	28	11	39%
T3	31	10	32%	T12	45	13	29%
T4	20	4	20%	T13	64	4	6%
T5	64	23	38%	T14	58	7	12%
T6	33	14	42%	T15	9	0	0
T7	37	15	41%	T16	29	18	62%
T8	58	33	57%	T17	48	5	10%
T9	71	2	3%	T18	14	0	0

In summary, the questions asked by both the teachers and pupils in a EFL classroom are quite different from the questions that are often discussed and encouraged in general educational research when teaching and learning is carried out in the first language, e.g. provocative questions for thinking, reasoning, imaginations and knowledge construction. The questions and answers found in this study are more often than not the content of learning and therefore were asked for practicing language structures and for developing interrogative strategies in a foreign language. However, there are some higher order questions asked by both teachers and pupils and the pupils were found really enjoying asking questions in a foreign language, for when children get chances to ask questions, learning changes its nature from reactive to proactive on the part of the learner. It was also noticed that two teachers (T15 and T18) did not give children opportunities to ask questions as the content of learning focused mainly on declarative structures.

6.3.6 Features of classroom feedback

6.3.6.1 Positive feedback and encouragement

Positive feedback is associated with conveying enthusiasm, generating interest and confirming responses and it was found in all the lessons observed. Obviously, all

these teachers were aware of the values and functions of positive feedback in encouraging good learning behaviours and for evaluating good performances. One teacher talked about her views towards positive feedback in this way:

> Sometimes just one word or sentence from the teacher or even a look can leave children with very deep memories. For those good pupils I set higher standards but for those who actively participated but are not perfect in their performances I give them more opportunities and encouragement. I encourage them from the bottom of my heart. I have told my pupils many times that they do not need to compare themselves to others but only themselves no matter how little progress they make they should be pleased. So my pupils, either faster or slower learners are all very confident about themselves' (T18, Group interview, 31-March-2005).

The kind of praise and encouragement in the lessons observed occurred in different forms and they also reflected different teaching styles and classroom cultures. For some teachers, they did not use much overt positive feedback but the classroom atmosphere was equally positive and encouraging. For some others, they used different overt feedback forms and created a sense of collectiveness among children and the atmosphere was full of encouragement. The following are the main forms of positive feedback and encouragement found in the classrooms observed.

- **Simple and all-purpose verbal praise such as 'good', 'very good'.**

  Simple praise words are used quite commonly by most of the teachers observed.

The following are two examples.

Excerpt 21 (T8, Grade 2)

T. How many carrots are there? (Repeated again)
S35. There are (..) six carrots.
T. Oh, there are six carrots. **Very good.**

Excerpt 22 (T9, Grade 3)

T. Where's the teacher? Where's the teacher? (Children were all raising up their hands) Tom.
S11. The teacher is (..)
T. Teacher is in the (.) office.
S11. office.
T. OK. **Very good!** The teacher is in the office.

- **More diagnostic and informative verbal feedback**

Excerpt 23 (T3, Grade 1)

T. How many pens do you have? (Repeated twice)
S42. I have zero.
T. Oh, you have zero pen.

Excerpt 24 (T18, Grade 6)

A student represents his group to read out loud to the class what they have written about 'good living habits':

S. Brush your teeth twice a day. Wash your face three times a day. Wash your hands before you eat. Go to bed early and get up early.
T. I don't think I can wash my face three times a day.
S. In a shower, too.
T. Ok. I see. OK. OK.

- **Whole class clapping hands.**

In a few lessons, children clapped hands occasionally to show their appreciation of a good answer or performance. But T16's lesson is specially featured by such a kind of class culture which was not found in other lessons. The class clapped hands together many times during the lesson. The following is an example.

Excerpt 25 (T16 Grade 4)

T. Thank you boys and girls. Now, it's our question time. Do you have any good questions? Put up your hands.
S7. Which animal is tallest?
S8. Giraffe.
T. Ok. Good. **Clap our hands for them. (Pa-Pa, Pa-Pa-Pa!)**
…
S11. Which animal do you like best and why?
S12. I like tiger because it is - it has very sharp teeth. (This continues with two more pairs)
T. Now, the last question.
S17. Which ice-cream do you like best and why?
S18. I like chocolate ice-cream best because it was ...it is very sweet.
T. **Very good. Clap our hands for them! (Pa-Pa, Pa-Pa-Pa!)**

- **External rewards to encourage both individual and group participation**

Some teachers divide the big class into groups and use the groups to record participation or good performance to encourage individual participation and also a sense of group spirit. Usually there is a corner on the blackboard for recording this. For example, T9 divided the class into two teams of boys and girls and let them have a competition and record their successes on the blackboard by drawing apples for Team 1 and pears for Team 2. T8 gave each group a small French-fry box, and some pieces of paper-made French fries, when a group member participated in an activity or volunteered an answer they would put into the box a piece of French fries. At the end of the lesson, each group counted their pieces to show how many of their group members participated in class activities and the teacher announced the winner for that lesson.

Another common way of rewarding and encouraging individual children for participating in class activities is to give stickers or small printed colourful cards. Most teachers would give a sticker to a child who has answered a question loudly and bravely, or who has acted out in class. T1 however, made her own colourful paper cards with some English words written on them. She described what she did as follows:

> I downloaded little pictures and printed some words like 'Well done!' 'Good try! 'Good job!' on them and I use colourful papers to print them and then cut them into smaller pieces. This is something I give out for children's participation to encourage them to speak up and participate in activities. When I see them holding these small cards in their hands, I know they have participated. When they have collected 10 or 12 pieces they can come to me to exchange for a little gift (T1, Individual interview, 27-Apirl-2005).

T10 who was teaching grade 3 expressed her concerns about using stickers for praising and encouraging learning: 'Using stickers is only one of the ways but should not be the only way. Giving children little stickers may make children feel bored especially boys although it works quite well for lower grades. Ways of praise should not be just a form but should be made more meaningful and effective' (Paired interview, 28-April-2005).

- **Teacher and pupils 'Give me five'.**

This is a way of reward used by T2 only in one of her class activities - When a child finished doing a task in front of the whole class, T said 'Give me five', and they struck each other's palms before the child returned to his/her seat. This was done with five children who went up to the blackboard to do some work.

- **Setting up high expectations with inspirations**

The following are a few more examples showing how some teachers encourage participation by setting up high expectation.

Excerpt 26 (T5 Grade 2)

T. OK. If you do well, I will touch your head or your shoulders and you will be my friend of vegetable…
SS. angels.
T. OK. Do you have confidence?
SS. Yes!
T. Come on!
SS Come on! (Children shouted very loudly together)

Excerpt 27 (T7, Grade 2)

After a child who has given her duty report introducing herself

T. **This is really very, very good.** She said more than ten sentences today. **Really wonderful.** (Children all clapped hands for her) **Everybody try to speak more, Ok?**
SS. **Ok!**

Excerpt 28 (T8, Grade 2)

T. OK. You are very clever. *You are very clever. Clever children like to ask questions.* Now it is Uncle Booky's story time. *It's Uncle Booky's story time. We will watch the story and then we will see who can ask more questions* Understand?
SS. Yes!

6.3.6.2 Corrective feedback

12 teachers provided overt corrective feedback and the forms are shown below:

- Whole class checking
- T direct correction
- T indirect/cued correction
- Pupil self-correction
- Peer correction with T's invitations
- Pupil initiated correction of the teacher's error
- Non-correction

The following is an example of T's cued correction.

Excerpt 29 (T9, Grade 3)

T. Now what do you understand?
S18. Mocky is selling Uncle Booky's things.
S19. This is Uncle Booky's things.
T. This is or these are?
S19. These are Uncle Booky's things.
T. You are right. These are Uncle Booky's things.

Teachers' attitudes and their understanding of learner errors are reflected from the interviews with them. For example, T10 commented: 'When children had just learned 'have' and 'has', they could not make a clear distinction between them. This is normal. The teacher should help them and give time for children to understand and digest by creating a relaxed and caring learning environment' (T10, Paired interview, 28-April-2005). T11 stressed that 'teachers have to do the corrections but it is a matter of how they do it. The teacher should do it with care for children self-esteem and tell them that the teacher believes that they are able to do it correctly' (T11, Paired interview, 28-April-2005).

Wrong answers from individuals are often used as stepping stones for understanding and learning opportunities for the whole class. The following are two examples (see Appendix 23 for more examples).

Excerpt 30 (T5, Grade 2)

T. Ok. Who can come and guess? Come here. Come here, please. Now, touch and guess. Touch and guess.
T. (to the whole class) } What are (.)
SS. } What are these?
S19. They are eggplants.
T. They are eggplants. Is that right?
SS. No!
T. Are these eggplants? Guess. No?
T. Who can help him? Who can help him?
S20. They are onions.
T. They are...
SS. onions. (T writes the word on the bb)
T. Look, what are these?
S21. They are onions. (Children repeated after the T a few more times together.)

Excerpt 31 (T8, Grade 2)

T. Oh, look here. Who is this? It's my friend. Please look. Is he a girl?
SS. No, he is a boy.
T. Yes. He's a boy. He's a lovely boy, yes or no?
SS. Yes.
T. Ok. His feet are very strong, yes or no?
SS. Yes!
T. He looks like a turtle. How many turtles are there? (repeated again)
S40. There are seven turtles.
T. How many turtles? *You counted so fast. Is that right?* Let's count again.
T&SS. One, two, three, four, five.
T. Ok, how many turtles are there? (repeated again) Let's count again.
T&SS. One, two, three, four, five.
T. There are...
SS. five turtles.

6.3.7 Features of classroom management and learning atmosphere

It was found from the observations that all these teachers possess effective strategies for managing young children in learning a foreign language in large classes. The following are some of the strategies teachers used for managing and ensuring discipline and effective learning.

- **Use of a variety of activities** to keep a majority of children interested and engaged (songs, chants, games, TPR activities, etc.);
- **Use of established rules** to keep order; ensure efficient task transition and attention calling. E.g. T claps three times, children shout together one, two three and get back to their own seat. T claps hands and children join in while returning back to their seats and become quiet. T shouts 'one, two', children shout together 'three, four!' or T calls out 'one, two three!' and children call out 'three, two, one!' while the class becomes quiet again.
- **Use count-downs** to ensure that children do their task quickly without losing attention (T1 and T6).

- **Use of Incentives.** T praises good behaviour and gives out stickers/ praise cards, or acknowledges those children who finish their task first (they are supposed to put up their hands when they finish). T notifies those who are the first ten to finish as good examples and sets expectations for other pupils.

The above strategies not only helped create the best learning environment possible for children but also helped develop in children a sense of collectiveness and awareness of responsibilities. Children were observed enjoying the lessons. They were highly motivated, and actively participating in activities. They bid for opportunities to speak or act in front of the whole class or answer the teacher's questions. Some children, when not nominated by the teacher for an opportunity to guess or act, looked really disappointed. Children all loved action songs and chants and they naturally started singing or chanting along with actions once the recorder started to play. Their enjoyment of the activities was clearly shown on their faces and in their expressive performances. Although in almost all the activities teachers were clearly in control and children were clearly aware of their roles and the rules in the classroom, they seemed happy and attentive. At all times in class, they were expected to follow instructions and listen to the teacher as well as to other pupils in whole class learning. Children seemed to have learned to be supportive to and appreciative for others in the process of learning. If someone had done a really good job, the whole class would clap to show appreciation and congratulations and the congratulated ones became exemplars for other children. The following are some of the teachers' comments about how they managed teaching and learning based on their understanding of children.

> They (Children) are afraid of me although I always smile and look very nice. They like me but are also afraid of me. If they do not behave, I pretend that I am very unhappy but do not really get angry at them. Children are so young, they are just being naughty. After that, I change my face and become nice to them again. (T1, Individual Interview, 27-April-2005)

> For my teaching, my principle is that my students should learn in an easy and relaxed environment but with good concentration and attention to learning. Especially for learning a foreign language, you can only express yourself well when you are relaxed. If you are nervous, you will not be able to express yourself well. But students have to be attentive as well. The teacher must, on the one hand, make them relaxed, on the other, make them concentrate. This is also my goal of teaching (T17, Group interview, 7-March-2005).

6.3.8 Teachers' roles observed

From the data presented and analysed so far, it was found that teachers in EFL primary classrooms in the Chinese context played a number of roles. At the beginning stage of the lessons, they motivated children by using songs and chants, questions and answers, TPR activities, etc. to tune children in for learning and prepared them for speaking the language. During this time they played the roles of a motivator and an activator for learning. In the middle stage, they introduced the new structures and vocabulary by eliciting what was already known and relevant, helping children to make a link between the new and the old. Thus, they acted as a helper and guide to children's learning. When they provided new input in meaningful context with clear modeling they became an input or knowledge provider. By giving individual and whole class opportunities to practise the new structures or vocabulary through repetitions, dialogues, games, role plays, pair and group work, they became organisers of activities, guides in understanding, and models for the new language. At the same time, they assessed and monitored children's understanding and performance, provided both encouraging and corrective feedback. Therefore, they acted as assessors, monitors and supporters. In making learning more accessible and manageable, they tried to break the learning loads into smaller steps by performing the role of a scaffold. What is more, throughout the lessons, most of the teachers were observed singing and chanting with children, playing games and role-playing with them, during which time both the teachers and children were participants in the learning process, acting as learning companions. Teachers also provided useful resources such as pictures, flash cards, multimedia environment for creating meaningful contexts for learning and therefore they could be considered as resources providers for children. As we can see, teachers played many different roles in the process of teaching although they might not be fully aware of the roles they played. One of the teachers, T9, when asked to reflect on what roles she played in her lesson, mentioned two roles that she played - a knowledge provider and a guide.

6.3.9 Teachers' views and main concerns over curriculum change

Thus far we have dealt with what was observed with some directly relevant comments or explanations on particular aspects of teaching these teachers made during their self-reflections after the observations. However, to make more sense of what was observed we need to examine in more detail some of the educational views

and assumptions in which these observed practices are grounded. By examining teachers' view and understandings of teaching through interviews, we found that teaching was not mindless or at random, but guided by principles, as Alexander (1984:147) put it that teaching is 'intensely theoretical'. The following presents some of the views and comments from both teachers who gave the lessons and those who participated in the interviews after observing the lessons. Six prominent themes emerged from the interview transcripts. They are listed and further discussed below:

- Views on LAMP/LC;
- Views about children;
- Views about the role of the teacher and instruction;
- Views on differentiated teaching;
- Views on the use of prescribed textbooks;
- Views concerning the process of change.

6.3.9.1 Teachers' views on the meaning of LAMP/LC

Teachers' views on the meaning of LAMP/LC seem to have focused on three key themes: 'children's activeness in thinking', 'children being enabled to use language in meaningful contexts', 'adequate class time given for children's activities'. One teacher believed that those steps preparing for children's learning should also be considered as reflecting LAMP/LC, indicating a view that learning needs to be examined holistically rather than atomizing individual learning activities. Another point make is that learning was not always external; some internal processes of learning may not be always observable. The following are some of the teachers views from the interview data (see more teachers' views in Appendix 24).

> I think whether a lesson is LAMP/LC or not depends on how active learners are in learning. They should be autonomous in learning and in doing things, be active in thinking. It depends on whether children can understand and use the language, whether they can use the language in meaningful contexts. Also from their learning behaviours we can tell whether the lesson reflects LAMP/LC or not. Their reactions can reflect their thinking underlying. (Teacher A, Group interview, 7-March-2005)

> The teacher creates a scenario or a context and children are encouraged and activated to accomplish a task. In fact, the process of accomplishing the task is a process of active learning. For lower grade learners, LAMP/LC is exemplified in activities, how much time is given to pupils' learning activities and how many pupils actually speak in class, etc. (Teacher C, Group interview, 7-March 2005)

> I think for higher grade learners, LAMP/LC is also reflected in children's active involvement in thinking. For example, in Wang Ying's (T17) class,

> you could feel that children were thinking at different stages during the class. Not necessarily that they have to do something autonomously which we could see, but in fact, they thought about the meaning and the language, even when they were not speaking or doing anything. Also, there are times when the T prepares children for the next stage of learning, it may not seem learner-centred, but it is an important step in teaching. (Teacher C, Group interview, 7-March-2005)
>
> Learning is not always external. It is also internal, internal language processing, that we may not be able to observe. (Teacher L, Group Discussion 7-March 2005)

6.3.9.2 Teachers' views about children

As Bruner (1996) points out, a teacher's conception of children shapes the kind of instruction he or she employs. It is therefore worthwhile to examine what teachers' perceptions of children are and how their perceptions have affected their ways of instruction. Quite a number of teachers in their interviews talked about their views about children which became the basis for their choice of instructions. They showed full awareness of the young age of children, trying to put themselves in the shoes of the children, making children's interests their point of departure in lesson planning. They did not think that songs and play were enough for children; they realised that children were also motivated when challenged and given opportunities to think for themselves. Some teachers also stressed the importance of helping children to form good habits for learning.

> My children are very young.... They cannot sit for long so I have to prepare a lot of activities, songs, chants, and actions.... When I design activities, I tried to think I was about the same age as they are and try to think what interests them. I will give them what they need rather than try to teach them what I should teach them. (T3, Group interview, 7-March-2005).
>
> I know some teachers prefer to let children learn through playing and acting, but I think children are happy not only when they are involved in actions but also in thinking。 They love challenges and are more active to use their brains to think. (T13, Group interview, 14-March-2005).

6.3.9.3 Teachers' views on the role of the teacher and instruction

The stress on teachers' roles is another theme emerging from the interviews. Teachers' clear design of the lessons, purposeful instructions coupled with their motivating strategies and timely guidance are seen as essential elements for effective learning. In other words, for teaching to reflect LAMP/LC, the teacher's roles should be stressed rather than be downgraded. At the same time, these teachers pointed out

that, in fact, how to make instruction effective is quite another matter, not so easy to achieve.

> I think students' active participation depends a lot on the teacher's effective teaching with clear instructions and guidance for children to learn. When teaching, the teachers are purposeful although pupils are not necessarily aware of it. (Teacher C, Group interview, 7-March 2005)
>
> The teacher's ways of motivating learners is actually very very important. But how to motivate learners is something that Ts have to think hard. Anyway, I think T's guidance is very important, without which there will be no pupils' effective learning in class. (Teacher D, Group interview, 7-March 2005)
>
> I agree that T's guidance and instructions are very important but how we can instruct well and effectively is quite another matter and it is actually very difficult. (Teacher F, Group interview, 7-March 2005)
>
> To make children learn successfully, the key lies with the teacher. It is the teacher who should design the lessons well so as to guide children step by step to move towards the goal (T11, Paired interview, 28-April-2005)

6.3.9.4 Teachers' views on differentiated teaching

That education should respect learner differences is one of the central tenets of child-centred education in the West. However, for Chinese teachers, helping children to reach common standards and ensuring equity are considered more important. From the previous data analysis (Section 6.3.4.1), it was found that 80 to 90 per cent of the class time was spent on whole class activities. Also, most of the classes had between 40 and 50 children, where individualised teaching in the Western sense was not observed – teacher and pupil in one-to-one interaction privately. In all the lessons observed, teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil interacting publicly is a common way of learning in Chinese classrooms. From the teachers' interviews we found that these teachers tried to meet the needs of different learners not by providing individual tuition in class time, but by setting up different levels of objectives and by using a wide range of activities to satisfy the diversified talents of the pupils so that all learners are able to benefit from whole class teaching. The following is what T1 said about how she catered for learner differences:

> I taught this class from their first day of school and I know the weaker ones. So when teaching new words, I would make sure those weaker ones get the chance to say them a bit more than others. When doing games, I level the games. The first game 'Turn around' is for all the children. I use it to stimulate participation from the whole class. The memory game is really meant for the medium level learners. The colour words are not new words, so they should be able to learn them by heart when required. The third game 'Stand up if

> you ...' gives children the chance to work in groups so the stronger ones can do it first and then they help the weaker ones. They take turns to do it. The last activity - describe your closet; I will have to call the good students to do it first. (T1, Individual interview, 27-April-2005).

The following presents more examples showing teachers' awareness of individual learner differences and how they tried to cope with them.

> I have different expectations for different levels of the learners. Generally, I design my lesson with three levels of objectives. The minimum level, the medium level, and the higher level. My minimum objective is that children are able to say the two sentences 'Do you have...' and 'Here you are' and understand the story. My medium level is to help children understand the questions about the story and answer some questions. My higher level is to let good students use what we learned today to express their personal meanings. (T10, Paired interview, 28-April- 2005)

> For those good pupils I set higher standards but for those who actively participated but are not perfect in their performances I give them more opportunities and encouragement. (T18, Group interview, 31-March-2005).

> I think everyone has their own learning methods. You should not force any ways of learning onto the pupils. ... I tell my children that they don't have to do the same as the teacher, perhaps, you could do even better than the teacher. (T1, Individual interview, 27-April-2005).

A number of the teachers also talked about other ways they employed in dealing with individual needs. It was common practice that many teachers spent extra time with individual learners in their class/lunch intervals or during after school time. Some teachers kept learner records and had children come to the teacher's office individually at different times to give them extra help or check their progress.

From the above we can see that good teachers try to cater for individual differences by understanding well each child and their ways of learning, by setting up different objectives, by designing different levels of tasks, by encouraging different ways of learning, and also by giving extra time to individuals who need more help.

6.3.9.5 Teachers' views on the use of prescribed textbooks

To the good teachers, the prescribed textbooks functioned as a spring board or a base for the content of teaching rather than mandatory requirements that must be followed strictly. Instead of being constrained or limited by the textbooks they used, they tried to instigate flexibility into the prescribed textbook, using strategies of integrative planning, pre-filtering, re-structuring, adding or filling-in gaps. Moreover,

they did not only have the textbooks in mind but also the children. They created their own resources and used other materials for teaching similar contents.

> As teachers we first need to know our textbooks well. At the same time, we must know about our students well - what they have learned, what they are learning, and what they will learn. Also, we should find out for the same content, how other textbooks have designed their teaching activities (T11, paired interview, 28-April-2006).
>
> I have a set of different textbooks in my hand. When teaching a topic, I would choose relevant tasks or activities from different books. I do not teach according to the order of one book but I take what is appropriate. Sometimes, I need to create my own chants or songs. (T3, individual interview, 16-March, 2006)
>
> We often discuss teaching and the textbook together. We have also studied the book for grade 4 although we are teaching grade 3 at the moment. We prepare children for new structures which are to come later when there is a context for us to do so and we do it implicitly. In other words, we do not formally teach those but just get children to understand them. So when it come for them to learn the new structure formally they will feel much easier (T10, paired interview, 28-April-2006).

6.3.9.6 Teachers' views concerning the process of change

In the interviews, quite a number of the teachers, both those who gave lessons and those who observed lessons, expressed their concerns over the gap between principles and practice as well as curriculum management mechanisms.

> I think it is quite easy to understand (LC) but practically, not necessarily every lesson can be successful in this sense. Sometimes a lesson can reflect the new ideology very well but sometimes the teacher needs to be in control. And also we must take into account students' age. Perhaps, I have not understood it very deeply. (T9, Group interview, 7-March-2005)
>
> As regarding the training we had, they are more theoretical but we need more practical guidance. We understand the curriculum but how to make our pupils speak more and do better, I think techniques are very important. We need more effective techniques and we cannot use the same technique again and again and if we do so children will quickly lose their interest (T11, Paired interview, 28-April-2005).

The teachers also expressed concerns over the ways in which the curriculum was managed and how much teachers felt pressured rather than supported.

> I think we are trying to implement the new curriculum step by step and changes are already taking place. Our only difficulty is the shortage of time. We simply have no time to prepare better and we have to take home a lot of work. We really want to teach well but to do well we need time to think and try to understand and find ways to do it. But we just feel that we have no time to think. (T10, Paired interview, 28-April-2005)

> The new curriculum and the new textbooks have given our teachers a lot of space of their own. It is no longer controlled and measured in every specific detail. This requires our teachers to have some quiet time to think. ... But there are so many other things which give them pressures not just teaching. ..If teachers cannot think through for themselves, there will not be good quality teaching for the students. It depends on whether each level of the leadership can plan things from the teachers' and learners' perspective. The slogans we have are all aimed at students' development, but when it comes to implementing the curriculum, there are various factors that interfere with it. ..Whether teachers are given the space to develop and to create, is, I think, the main factor for successful implementation of the new curriculum. (Teacher Z Group interview, 7-March-2005)

6.4 What was found and not found regarding classroom teaching?

6.4.1 What was found?

The following summarises what was found from both the observation studies and interviews:

- Most classrooms (12 out of 18) were found in the traditional form of T-fronted lines and rows with 40-50 children in one class and limited space for movements and activities. However, seating arrangements did not seem to have affected the ways how interactions took place in classrooms.
- There was a strong sense of collectiveness in the process of teaching and learning as T-directed whole-class activities were being the dominant forms of teaching, which takes up 75% to 100% of the class time leaving an average of 2 to 4 minutes for pair/group or individual work. There was also a clear concern for common learning targets to be achieved.
- These teachers used a range of pedagogical alternatives during whole class teaching – both learner-centred and teacher-centred to promote, engage, and encourage children to work toward the common goal. The activities included: action songs and chants, questions and answers (between the teacher and children individually or as a whole class, and between one child and another child), guessing games, competitions, role-plays, listening to recordings, watching video/multimedia shows, writing, as well as look and say, reading aloud, whole class or individual drilling and repetitions, and word recognition activities. The teachers coped with individual differences by setting up different requirements and giving opportunities for individual participations.
- The teachers were in control of what was to be learned and how it was to be learned most of the time. They taught with clear objectives and specific content to cover from the prescribed textbooks, but they were not being constrained by them. They adapted the material to meet the needs of their children. Teaching was clearly structured and graded in phases within which there were smaller cycles of input and practices, often moving from mechanical or drilling to more meaning-focused interactive activities, such as role-plays and interviewing.
- There was only occasional explicit explanation of grammar. Normally, new structures and vocabulary were presented in context based on what was already learned and practised by involving children in speaking, listening, reading,

writing, acting and singings. There were also opportunities for children to develop skills for learning in some classrooms.

- The teachers were all linguistically competent and skilful in managing large classes and young children. On the one hand, they used a variety of activities to keep children interested in participating in activities; on the other hand, they had their own ways and established classroom rituals or rules to ensure smooth transition and good discipline for learning to take place with every child.
- Teachers used a variety of teaching aids, including pictures, flash cards, teachers' own drawings, tape recordings, multimedia facilities, classroom realia, real objects, large papers and colourful pens for the purpose of creating meaningful scenarios in presenting and practising the language learned.
- Varieties of techniques were used to praise and encourage learning - both verbal and external rewards, emphasizing active participation, good attention and hard work from all the pupils. As far as corrective feedback was concerned, teachers used most often direct correction but pupils were also cued to do self-correction and peer-correction. Whole-class feedback was commonly done. No excessive correction is found and pupils' errors were often used as opportunities for learning.
- In the lessons observed, teachers were found playing many different roles. They demonstrated new language, modelled learning, motivated participation, organised activities, managed time and order, and provided corrective feedback where appropriate. They also sang and acted together with children. Thus, they played the roles of a knowledge provider, a demonstrator, a model of new language, a motivator, an organiser, an assessor, a manager, as well as a participant.
- The classroom atmosphere was overall well-ordered, active, supportive and encouraging but decision-making was mostly in the hands of the teachers'.

6.4.2 What was not found?

- Open-plan classrooms were rarely found (1 out of 18). Although five classrooms were arranged in groups, they were not common practice in most Chinese schools as it often depends on the whole school policy and reform culture. Unless a school decides that all subjects are to be taught in the same seating arrangement it is not practical to change seating just for English lessons.
- Differentiated tasks/activities to cater for different levels of pupils were not found. Children were expected to do the same activity most of the time.
- Opportunities for pupils to work with different partners were not found except in the activities of two interview tasks (T2 and T6) in which children were allowed to ask questions to any child they wanted in the class;
- Project work was not found;
- Opportunities for pupils to make choices or make decisions were not found;
- Opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning or to do self-assessment were not found , e.g. reflecting on what they have done and what they have done successfully or unsuccessfully;
- Opportunities for pupils to set goals and make plans for their own learning were

not found;

- Teachers exchanging learning targets and making learning outcomes clear were not found;
- Children learning through discovery was rarely found;
- Teachers sharing or discussing feelings with pupils were not commonly found.

Despite general patterns and commonalities of teaching found from the good teachers, there are obviously individual differences in the ways and styles of teaching. For example, they are different in employing different activities, involving different number of individual participations, in using classroom management strategies, in asking questions and in motivating children to ask questions. They also used different kinds of resources and degrees of repetition and imitations.

CHAPTER 7 DISCUSSION

This chapter attempts to bring together what was found from different sources of data and explore and compare to what extent the officially espoused policy is understood, reportedly practised, and implemented in classrooms. Western views and practices of LC and Chinese teachers' views and practices of LAMP/LC are highlighted and discussed with regard to different social, cultural and institutional contexts. Issues arising from the process of curriculum change are also discussed. The chapter ends with a reconceptualisation of LC in the Chinese context.

7.1 LAMP/LC perceived and implemented by Chinese primary teachers

7.1.1 Overall positive attitudes vs. the choice of a middle path

Unlike what was found from earlier research on Chinese teachers' attitudes towards change by Kennedy (1999:30), with teachers feeling 'alienated from the change' and 'resentment at the top-down, coercive approach' to the introduction of a new syllabus which advocates learner-centred teaching, this study on primary English curriculum reform in China revealed quite a different picture. Data from both the questionnaire and interviews showed that a vast majority of primary teachers who participated in the study unanimously welcomed the LAMP/LC approach (88.2%, see Figure 5.10). They valued its benefits for children's overall development, particularly their affective development – interests and motivation, self-confidence, and sense of responsibility for learning (Section 5.9.1), all of which were recognised as lacking in the traditional Chinese education which placed too much an emphasis on memorisation of grammatical rules and decontextualised vocabulary list. The reasons for such an overwhelming support for curriculum change could be explained on the following grounds: (1) In general, all primary teachers under study are relatively young in age who are more receptive to new ideas (e.g. about 70% of the teachers surveyed are between the ages of 20-29 and nearly 27% between 30-39; see Figure 5.2); (2) In principle, no one would deny that teaching should be based on the understanding of children, should satisfy children's needs, should take place in a positive and supportive environment, should encourage active participation, and should make learning a fun and intellectually satisfying experience. All these are basic tenets of learner-centred ideas; (3) There has been public discontent over the past few years with the traditional way of teaching a foreign language and teachers

share the visions and inspirations depicted in the new curriculum for the opportunity of change to benefit children's learning and their overall development (Section 5.9.1); (4) Compared with middle school teachers, primary teachers have less pressure teaching to the tests as there is no rigid national test required of primary children. Therefore, they are more amenable to curriculum change. (5) The notions of LAMP/LC come into public consciousness as a way to promote change in education in the 21st century with principles of teaching and methodologies recommended and stipulated in the government document. It would be a surprise for teachers who identify with the current trends in education to respond with strong resistance.

Despite the fact that teachers were overwhelmingly supportive of LAMP/LC, it was found from both the questionnaire survey of 1000 primary teachers and classroom observation of 18 teachers representing good practices, that pedagogically, teachers preferred a middle path – TDLC (81.7%, see Figure 5.12). Teachers' reported practices from the survey and observations of 18 lessons both showed that they employed a hybrid of teaching methods. On the one hand, they demonstrated and modelled new knowledge, employed repetitions, choral drilling, and lower order questioning to assist learning with a concern to achieve the learning objectives and covering the content set out by the curriculum and textbook requirements; on the other hand, they were keen on creating a warm and motivating learning environment, trying to scaffold learning by building new knowledge on children's existing knowledge, breaking learning-load into smaller steps, providing meaningful contexts for both input and practice, engaging children in activities to use what they learned to communicate with others, and trying to make learning both cognitively challenging and affectively enjoyable. The former cluster of practices has been considered to be teacher-centered practices while the latter learner-centred. Also, teachers saw themselves playing both teacher-centred roles, e.g. knowledge providers (73.6%) and organisers (83%), and learner-centred roles, e.g. guide (78.4%), participants (71.1%), and learning companions (81.4%).

As we can see, there exists a discrepancy between teachers' overall attitude towards LAMP/LC and their pedagogical choice. In other words, principle-wise, these teachers are strong supporters of the LAMP/LC approach; pedagogically, they seemed to honour both sides of the TC and LC approaches and tried to mediate between them under conditions of a prescribed curriculum and textbooks, embedded in the cultural values and routine educational practices, as well as institutional

arrangements such as large classes, heavy workload, lack of resources and young age of children, in addition to their own beliefs as well as linguistic and instructional capabilities.

What needs to be pointed out is that the middle path or the TDLC approach does not denote one uniform way of teaching. The current research showed that teachers had different reasons for taking the TDLC approach and interpreted the approach in many different ways (see 5.7.1). Overall, teachers preferred TDLC for its proper emphasis on teachers' roles in directing learning while, at the same time, giving learners opportunities to exercise their roles as main participants. However, the degrees of teacher direction and forms of learner participation exemplified a wide range of differences. In fact, teachers were found at various points along the continuum between LC and TC (see Figure 5.12), conducting teaching with different degrees of teacher direction and different degrees of learner-centredness (see 5.7.1.3).

Like all educational ideologies which are overtly abstract and insufficiently practical (Bruner, 1996), LC, as a curriculum goal, is rather abstract and vague to Chinese teachers, although its values for children's overall development were widely recognised. According to Wheeler (1967), curriculum ideologies, as inspirations for educational change, often represent optimistic views. When implementations are being sought, difficulties and confusions often result. It was shown from the questionnaire and interview data that despite these teachers' overwhelming enthusiasms, various constraints and difficulties were spelt out for implementing change (see 5.9.2). At the same time, there existed quite a lot of confusions and misinterpretations as to what LC or LAMP actually meant and what it was like in classrooms (See 5.10 and 5.11). The reasons for such a gap between LAMP/LC as a curriculum goal and LAMP/LC as classroom practice lie in that, as Keating (2005) points out, curriculum goals often provide guiding principles which are often insensitive to local conditions. Tudor (1996) believes that LC is more of an attitude or awareness, which does not equal to a particular set of applicable classroom techniques that work for all contexts. In other words, LC or LAMP principles are illuminative rather than operational. However, teachers who embrace the ideology will need specific procedures or techniques to help them mediate such an attitude within their own classroom realities. Such mediations between ideologies and practices can only be developed in the context where teachers teach. In other words, there is no one way of teaching that is learner-centred. LAMP/LC can take different

forms in different contexts by different teachers. This explains why LAMP/LC as an attitude or aspiration was welcomed and supported by a majority of Chinese primary teachers, whereas in practice, TDLC, as a pedagogical middle path, was adopted by most teachers as a practically workable solution with different degrees of teacher-direction relevant to their specific teaching contexts and possible within their own teaching capabilities.

What is important to bear in mind is that any choice of pedagogical practice implies a conception of teaching and learning (Bruner, 1996), which at the same time, communicates the social and cultural values held in that particular teaching context. This is to be further discussed in 7.2.3.

7.1.2 The planned, perceived, reported and implemented LAMP/LC compared

In the following, the planned, perceived, reportedly practised, and the implemented curriculums are compared. The comparisons are based on:

- main ideologies promoted in the new English curriculum introduced in Chapter 2;
- findings presented and analysed in Chapter 5 concerning teachers' perceptions and reported practices regarding LAMP or LC by 1000 primary teachers;
- findings presented and analysed in Chapter 6 concerning what was implemented in classrooms by 18 teachers of accepted good practices.

The purpose is to find out how much the principles as planned in the curriculum become accepted or incorporated into the belief systems of the 1000 teachers, and whether these beliefs are further practised by these teachers based on their reports, and how much of what is planned, believed, and reportedly practised can be found in real classroom practices of some good teachers at the time of the study.

The ideologies promoted in NECS introduced in Section 2.7 reflected a clear paradigm shift from the traditional teacher-dominated, knowledge-based transmission mode of teaching to a more learner-centred, experience-based, problem-solving mode of teaching. The new ideologies put more emphases on satisfying learners' affective demands – caring for their interests, motivation, and self-confidence, cultivating their creative minds, developing their metacognitive strategies – learning how to learn through planning, reflecting, assessing their own learning, and encouraging cooperative and interactive learning processes.

All these new ideologies mixed with some traditional beliefs were built into the questionnaire to find out to what degrees these teachers identified with the new ideologies. Also, these beliefs were translated into corresponding classroom behaviours for teachers to report that to what degrees they thought they had implemented these beliefs in their practices. All these were further checked against the 18 lessons of good practices. Table 7.1 below summarises the main findings on the beliefs and the reported practices of 1000 primary English teachers (based on Tables 5.7 and 5.12), and the implemented practices of 18 teachers (See Chapter 6). The findings were listed based on the order of agreement from the highest percentage to the lowest with regards to beliefs presented in the first column. As not necessarily all the statements listed as beliefs had exact corresponding practices, the ones that shared the closest meaning were paired up for purposes of comparison. If a teaching behaviour was not observed in classrooms, 'Not observed' would apply (See Table 7.1 below. Shaded boxes are particularly noteworthy findings to be further discussed).

Table 7.1 Teachers' beliefs, reported practices and implemented pedagogies compared

	Beliefs (N=1000) (% who agreed)	**Reported practices (N=1000) (% who reported this in their practice)**	**Implemented LC (Based on 18 lessons)**
1	Relaxed, harmonious and democratic environment is good for learning. (97%)	My classroom atmosphere is relaxed, democratic, and harmonious for children to participate in activities. (88.2%)	Classrooms were observed in warm and encouraging atmosphere, supportive to children's learning (Section 6.3.6.1and 6.3.7)
2	Teachers should try as much as possible to understand every child's need, interests, capacity and aptitudes. (96.8%)	I pay attention to change my ways of teaching based on the needs of different children. (82.8%)	Teachers were aware of learner differences and tried to use different activities to cater for such differences in whole class activities (Section 6.3.9.4)
3	Every child has his/her own characteristics. Teachers should treat each child with respect. (96.6%)	I never look down upon slow learners. (86.7%)	Teachers used various means to motivate and involve as many children as possible and praise good learning behaviours. No unfair treatment of children was observed.
4	It helps with learning when children are engaged in pair/group work (96.4%)	I often organise pair/group work in class. (93.1%)	Pair or group work was observed in 15 out of 18 lessons. However they took only about 2-4 minutes of the total teaching time (Section 6.3.4.1).
5	Teachers should create opportunities for children to express their own ideas and feelings. (96.4%)	I create opportunities and encourage children to express their own ideas, feelings or opinions. (88.1%)	A stage of personalisation was observed in most lessons during which children were encouraged to use what they learned to express their own meanings (Section 6.3.3.2)
6	The best way for children to learn is through enjoyable activities and active participation. (96.1%)	I do a variety of activities which are suitable for primary pupils. (82%)	A variety of activities were organised and children were encouraged to participate in all kinds of activities (Section 6.3.4.2).

7	Building new knowledge on old knowledge helps with learning. (92.9%)	I always introduce the new content based on what pupils already know. (92.5%)	Teachers were observed scaffolding learning with well-structured activities, always reviewing what was learned before new items were introduced. (Section 6.3.3.2)
8	Exams are not the best way to assess learning. (91.9%)	I don't often use tests to assess my pupils' learning. (77.8%)	Not observed.
9	It is not very important to explain grammar rules to children. (91%)	I don't explain grammar rules in detail when teaching new grammatical items. (68.9%)	Very little explanation of grammar was observed. New grammar items were all presented in meaningful contexts (Section 6.3.4.4).
10	Engaging children with interest and attention is far more important than mechanical learning. (91%)	I pay special attention to foster pupils' interests and protect their self-esteem. (93.3%)	Songs and chants, TPR and games, as well as a variety of activities were employed to the interest of the children (Section 6.3.4.3)
11	Children are different and learn in different ways*. (89.2%)	I pay attention to change my ways of teaching based on the needs of different children. (82.8%)	Teachers used different levels of activities to cater for different levels of learner groups during whole class activities (Section 6.3.9.4)
12	Children can be involved in self-assessment. (87.2%)	I often organise self-assessment activities. (51.9%)	Not observed.
13	It is important to give children the opportunity to choose their own ways of learning. (83.9%)	I give children opportunities to choose their own ways of learning and doing different homework. (51.7%)	Not observed.
14	To learn a language is not to learn its grammar and vocabulary*. (82.4%)	In my class, I don't teach by explaining vocabulary and structures followed by pupils' practice. (81.4%)	Grammar and vocabulary were all presented in context using visual aids to arouse interest, motivation and facilitate understanding for meaning (Section 6.3.4.4)
15	Reciting, repeating, and copying are not the best ways to help children remember new words. (81%)	I often give my pupils opportunities to ask questions and to activate their thinking and imagination. (71.1%)	Children were given opportunities to actively participate in learning new words, by acting, repetitions, asking questions, developing strategies (Section 6.3.4)
16	Publicising test result cannot facilitate learning. (79.8%)	I rarely publicise pupil's test results*. (72.3%)	Not observed.
17	For effective teaching, good discipline is necessary. (73.3%)	I stress on good discipline and try to keep good order during class time. (91.1%)	All lessons were in good order with active participation from the pupils (Section 6.3.7).
18	The main goal for teaching English is to teach the basics. (65.4%)	My teaching aim is to help learners to master basic knowledge and skills of the language. (65.7%)	Lessons were observed with clear linguistic objectives and language contents to cover and emphasised listening, speaking, and basic writing skills (Section 6.3.2).
19	Children have the ability to be involved in setting-up their own goals and making their own plans. (47.6%)	I often guide my pupils to do planning for learning. (32.3%)	Not observed.
20	The best way to learn a language is through imitation, repetition, and memorisation. (44.9%)	I often ask my pupils to repeat after me or the tape-recorder. (77.2%)	Repetitions were found in most of the lessons but with different forms as well as different degrees (Section 6.3.4.6)

* Statements have been reversed for purposes of comparison.

As far as teachers' beliefs are concerned, they were very much in line with the ideologies promoted in the new curriculum with 16 out of 20 statements agreed to by

over 80-97% of the teachers. The last four statements showed some divisions of opinions among the teachers and also between the planned and the perceived curriculum. They concerned the issue of discipline, attention to the basics, children's ability to set up their own goals and make their own plans, and the use of imitation and repetition in learning. For these four statements, it was found that 73.3% of the teachers believed that discipline was important to ensure effective learning and 65.4% believed that the basics still needed to be attended to. Also, nearly half of the teachers (47.6%) believed that children did not have the ability to set up their own goals or plan their own learning while about 45% of the teachers considered imitation, repetition and memorisation the best way of learning. The former two issues concerning discipline and the basics had been the centre of debate for years in child-centred education, and most Chinese teachers surveyed were found disagreeing with child-centred notions in these two respects. The findings from the latter two concerning children's ability to plan their own learning and the use of repetition and imitation seemed to have largely contradicted what were advocated in the planned curriculum.

Comparing what teachers believed in with what they reportedly practised and also with what good teachers did in classrooms, we find a general consistency between the beliefs and the reported practices with a slightly lower percentage in the latter on a majority of the statements. This indicated that in most of the circumstances, not all the teachers did what they believed in. However, most of the listed beliefs and reported practices were observed in good teachers' lessons in one way or another. For example, 97% of the teachers believed that a relaxed atmosphere is good for learning while 88.2% of them reported that their classroom atmosphere was relaxed and harmonious, and almost all the lessons observed were in warm and supportive atmosphere. Similarly, 96.8% of the teachers believed that they should try as much as possible to understand every child's need, interests, capacity and aptitudes and 82.8% of them reported that they had tried to do so. Classroom observations and teacher interviews showed that teachers all tried various ways to cater for children's individual differences and integrated the learning contents with children's interests by creating meaningful contexts for learning. Similar finding also include: building new knowledge on children's existing knowledge (Statement No.7), paying special attention to children's interest and motivation in learning (Statement No.10), teaching not by explaining grammar and vocabulary (Statement No.14). However, as for

organising pair/group work, although an overwhelming majority of the teachers believed that group and pair work were helpful for learning (96.4%) and a similar number of teachers (93.1%) reported to have done so in classrooms, whole class teaching was found predominant in all the lessons observed. Pair/group work was found in 15 out of 18 lessons observed and they were done all very briefly, taking an average of 2-4 minutes in a total of 30-40 minutes lesson, not taking into account of the purposes and effectiveness of such forms of learning.

An interesting opposite discrepancy between beliefs, reported practices, and implemented practices was found in statement No.20, which showed that while only 44.9% of the teachers believed that the best way for learning a language was through imitation, repetition, and memorisation, a far greater percentage of the teachers (77%) reported that they had often asked children to repeat after them or the tape recorder and most of the teachers observed also used imitations and repetitions with different degrees of intensity. This showed an opposite fact that teachers also did what they did not believe in. Such a phenomenon seemed quite understandable in a sense that imitation, repetition, and memorisation had been rhetorically associated with the traditional way of teaching while in the tide of curriculum change, most teachers psychologically would not want to identify with them but nonetheless finding them indispensable in practice, resulting in a gap between the belief and reported/real classroom practices.

The gaps between what they believed in and what they reportedly practised as well as what has been implemented widened in the cases which mainly involved the development of children's metacognitive skills. For example, 87.2% believed that children could be involved in self-assessment while only 51.9% reported that they did so in classrooms and no such instances were found in the 18 lessons observed. Similarly, 83.9% believed that it was important to give children opportunities to choose their own ways of learning while only 51.7% reported that they did so in teaching and no instances of such were observed. As for 'involving children to set up their own goals and make their own plans, less than 50% of the teachers believed in it while a much lower percentage of the teachers reported that they did so in teaching (32.3%), and again such instances were not observed. It may be true that this was due to the fact that each teacher was observed only once, therefore, it was difficult to reflect what they would do in other lessons at other times. However, what is obvious is that to implement these ideas in classrooms requires new pedagogical strategies as

these ideas are all promoted for the first time in the new curriculum and are rarely found in traditional classrooms. In traditional classrooms, it is always the teacher who sets up goals and makes plans for children's learning according to the textbooks and curriculum requirements and also it is the teacher who is to assess learning rather than children being involved in assessing their own learning. It is also the teacher who tells children what to do rather than having children choose their own ways of learning. The only kinds of choices given to children from the lessons observed were when they were encouraged to ask their own questions or do activities that involved personalisation (see 6.3.5.2 and examples in 6.3.3.2).

So far, what we have found is that, first, positive attitude does not necessarily always lead to intended teaching behaviours. Secondly, what is not believed in may well be practised, e.g. the use of imitation, repetition, and memorisation. According to Ajzen (1988), three factors interact to produce an intention to behaviour and consequently action on the part of the teacher. Their attitudes, the subjective norms, which reflect not the individual's positive evaluation towards the behaviour but what the individual believes others think about the behaviour concerned, and the perceived behavioural control which refers to the enhancing or limiting factors associated with the context such as 'the presence or absence of requisite resources and opportunities' (p.135) or the amount of control the individual feels he/she has over change. That is to say, not only one's attitudes, but also other people's attitudes, plus the availability of resources and opportunities, as well as one's power of control over change work together to influence one's commitment to behavioural change.

Despite all the gaps between the planned and the perceived, the perceived and the reportedly practised, the reportedly practised and real classroom teaching by good teachers, it is evident that English lessons are changing their nature from solely explicit teaching of language knowledge – grammar and vocabulary *per se* to activity-based experiential learning, integrating academic goals with affective goals under positive and motivating learning environments. However, curriculum change is, indeed, a complex process, determined by many factors. It is also a developmental process with some embraced ideologies being accepted and implemented in precedence over others. For example, those ideologies such as adjusting teaching to the interests, abilities, and learning styles of the children they teach, are what all good teachers have been trying to achieve no matter what approach they take. For some other ideologies, teachers need to develop new instructional strategies to put them

into practice. If training is not available or not practical enough, it will be difficult for teachers to put them into their classroom practice even though they have beliefs in them.

7.1.3 Multiple interpretations, confusions and diverse practices

It was found from this study that the concept of learned-centredness was understood quite differently by different teachers. While most teachers took it as a positive concept in education, quite a number of the teachers understood it with a negative meaning. For them, LC means that the teachers give up control and students do whatever they want to (see 5.7.1.2). Different interpretations were also found when teachers tried to explain the differences between the Western term of LC and Chinese term of LAMP (see 5.10). While 70% of the teachers believed that there were differences between the two terms, 30% did not regard them as different. Among the 70% who believed in some differences, 46% believed that the differences lay in the neglect of teachers' roles in the term of LC while 42% could not explain clearly where the differences were. The rest showed contradictory understandings of the two terms (Figure 5.29). All these showed that many teachers were not really sure what LC or LAMP should be taken to mean, which would inevitably lead to different degrees of teacher-direction in teaching and different degrees of learner-centredness in classroom practice as evidenced from teachers' reported practices. Teachers' beliefs in the roles they should play and roles they reported that they played well also showed large variations (see 5.3.3. and Table 5.9). Diverse views were also found in teachers' perceptions concerning 'the goals of English language teaching', 'the qualities of a good learner' and 'the meaning of learning' (see 5.3.2, 5.3.4, and 5.3.5), despite a general pattern of agreement from a majority of the teachers.

The practices of LC also showed a wide range of differences from both teachers' reported practices and classroom observations despite some general patterns of agreement found from the survey and common features observed in good practices. In the teachers' reported practices illustrated in Table 5.12, we found that their ways in dealing with grammar, in engaging children to plan their learning and choose their learning, as well as in the use of self-assessment activities or exams varied quite a lot. Classroom observations showed that the 18 teachers also varied in their classroom layout (Figure 6.1), in using teaching aids (Figure 6.2), in classroom interaction

patterns (Table 6.4), in employing different activities (Table 6.5) and in the ratio of teacher and pupil questions (see Table 6.6).

As we can see, despite general patterns of agreement in terms of both teachers' attitudes and practices regarding LAMP/LC, individual teachers' beliefs, interpretations, and mediation of LAMP/LC showed quite a range of variations, reflecting the complicated nature and process of curriculum change, which is to be further discussed in 7.3.2.

7.2 Views and practices of LC – the West and China

7.2.1 Views and practices of LC in the West (UK and US)

Based on the literature review, we know that the notion of LC in the West developed from child-centredness into learner-centredness carrying with it both historical meanings and meanings developed in modern times along with different emphases, disagreements, and confusions. Many aspects of the notion were revisited, reformulated and further developed over the years into a more comprehensive and fully represented contemporary version of LC in Learner-centred Psychological Principles (APA, 1997) stressing an integration of attention to both learners and learning as well as social and individual needs (see Sections 3.2 and 3.3). The contemporary version of LC also gives a strong emphasis on the idea of learning to learn in addition to satisfying learners' affective needs, caring for individual differences, and learning through experience, discovery, cooperation, and meaning construction. In the field of ELT, there have been disagreements over whether ELT should be learner-centred or learning-centred and to what degrees learners can be involved in planning, selecting, evaluating their own learning. There have also been arguments on whether LC is appropriate for other cultural contexts which are very different from where the ideology was originated in the West. The practices of LC in the West also met with many different forms both in the United States and in Britain in the first half and three quarters of the 20th century respectively, as represented by progressive education in the U.S. and child-centred education in the UK although a number of research showed that the ideology was never implemented fully despite the rhetoric. They both ended with official abandonment of the ideologies for their illusions and students' low attainment in the last quarter of the century. As a result, the push for 'standards-based reform' has been the latest attempt to improve schools through the imposition of tightly prescribed curricular and assessment standards

(Harris, 2003:370) in both the UK and US. Teaching, thus, began to shift its focus more on the basics through whole-class teaching with the assumption that every child can learn and has to reach the required level of attainment by the end of a specific learning period.

7.2.2 Views and practices of LAMP/LC in China

As reviewed in the literature (see 3.7.1), Chinese educational views have been strongly influenced by Confucian ideas and have been known to be following a traditional approach with teachers at the centre as authorities. LC as principles for guiding practice entered into Chinese education only in the recent educational reform since 2001 initiated by the government although there had been research going on to change the traditional approach since the late 1980s among academics (see 3.7.2). The guiding principle for reform, as introduced in 2.3, was termed as LAMP (learners-as-main-participants), which not only stressed the role of learners in the learning process, but also left space for teachers to direct learning with effective instructions. As far as views are concerned, it is found that in principle, LAMP shares a lot of similar views with LC in the West in terms of paying attention to learners' interests and motivation to learn, emphasising the active roles played by learners in the learning process, encouraging learners to actively participate in activities with their creative minds and imaginations; advocating learning through experience, discovery, cooperation, and problem solving; and developing learners' metacognitive skills. Moreover, it acknowledges that learners are different and should be treated with respect and be helped as much as possible individually. At the same time, standards are proposed with enhanced learning outcomes expected of every learner. The survey study in this research showed that the majority of Chinese primary EFL teachers identified with the overall beliefs and principles of LAMP/LC. They also shared, to a large extent, beliefs of LAMP in terms of their roles as teachers, who should function as guides, organisers, learning companions, and participants in addition to knowledge providers. They had no doubt that they possessed the authoritative knowledge and skills in at least the English language. In Heron's (1992:66) words, they believed that they possessed at least the 'cognitive authority'. Most of them also believed that teaching the basics was their primary task but without denying the importance of fostering children's interest and motivation in learning the basics. As for learners' decision-making about their own learning and learners'

involvement in setting up their own goals and making their own plans, a lot of the Chinese teachers did not think that primary children had the ability to do so.

As far as practices are concerned, some good primary EFL teachers in China were found trying their best to foster children's affective development while striving to help as many children as possible in developing their language knowledge and skills. They were found working with large classes and whole class activities took most of the class time. At the same time, these teachers tried to find time to interact one-to-one in their classroom rounds attended by the public. It was also found that all the lessons were well-structured, which functioned as a kind of scaffolding to assist children's learning (see 6.3.3). Repetitions and rote learning were used as steps leading towards the goal of using the knowledge more freely. Public probing and error correction were often used as instructive opportunities for all pupils to learn. Viewed in an isolated way, either repetition or public error correction may seem mechanical and traditional or more teacher-centred, but once they are employed as a step forward within an organically interrelated whole process toward the goal of communication, they certainly have their values and roles to play.

In such a process of teaching and learning, teachers' roles reflected a mixture of authoritarianism and learner-centredness They played the roles of a knowledge provider – they were the ones who provided the language input; an organiser – they organised whole class activities and group/pair work and maintained good order in learning; a guide - they demonstrated and modelled the use of new language in context; a participant – they role-played, sang and chanted with children; a helper – they provided necessary feedback both positive and corrective to help children gain confidence and competence in a new foreign language. Classroom exchanges between a teacher and a child were all very brief and repetitive geared towards involving as much individual or whole class participation as possible within limited class time. It was not common for a teacher to engage with one pupil for long turns of talk, but often very briefly for one or two turns. It was found that Chinese primary teachers became more aware of learner differences and tried to cater for such differences by (a) setting up different levels of objectives and designing different levels of games or activities so as to enable participation from different levels of the children (See 6.3.9.4); (b) by achieving a balance between allowing children to bid for answers and teacher nominating particular children so as not to result in the active ones always getting opportunities to participate; (c) by designing questions or tasks

that allowed children to respond at their own levels and choices. In other words, children could say what they could instead of one correct answer being expected by the teacher (see Excerpt 15, 16, 17 for examples); (d) by allowing children to ask their own questions (see 6.3.5.2); (e) by asking questions to individual learners; (f) by providing opportunities for children to do pair and group work though they were done very briefly (see 6.3.4.1 and 6.3.4.9); (g) by allocating more difficult questions or tasks to more able children and less difficult tasks to less able children and also allow more able children to model for less able ones; and finally by using special techniques such as praise cards or drawing lottery of names to ensure participation from as many pupils as possible (e.g. T10 and T18). At the same time, worries and uncertainties as how to cater for individual learner differences in large classes still perplexed many teachers.

Helping and guiding children to develop good learning habits was observed in a few lessons (see 6.3.4.5). However, the kind of practices involving metacognitive strategies was not commonly found. The fact that no teachers were observed explicitly guiding children to develop their metacognitive awareness and skills suggests that teachers lacked operational strategies to put these ideas into practice although the questionnaire survey showed that teachers were aware of the need to develop such strategies promoted by the new curriculum.

Different from Breen *et al*'s (2001) study, which found shared principles but particular practices among 18 ESL teachers teaching both adults and children in Australia, the present research finds that a majority of the Chinese primary teachers have shared principles along with divisions of opinions. Their reported and observed practices also have demonstrated shared features along with diversified teaching styles. These distinctive features of LAMP/LC derived from classroom practices seem to be the 'appropriate methodologies' in the EFL primary context in China at the time of the research, which were not 'borrowed' from 'outside' but were developed by practitioners within the context embedded in the social, cultural, institutional values, traditions and needs as well as determined by the intellectual and professional capabilities of these teachers (Holliday, 1994b).

7.2.3 Social and Cultural contexts - China and the West

From this study, we find that many of the central notions of LC were shared by most Chinese primary EFL teachers surveyed and were also incorporated into the

classroom practices of good teachers with clear Chinese characteristics. These practices evolved into a form of teaching that is neither the same as the traditional teacher-dominant, knowledge transmission mode of teaching, nor the same as the historical or modern child-centred ideologies debated and practised in the UK or US. It is a middle ground typified by teacher-directed whole class teaching with active participation from as many pupils as possible who are being motivated to learn. The middle path pedagogy is not only a reflection of the social, cultural traditions and values of the Chinese society but also determined by institutional arrangements and teachers' personal factors. In other words, a teacher's choice of the pedagogy is not free from the context. It is a reflection of both the macro and micro cultures in which they live and teach.

As far as social and cultural contexts are concerned, China and the West represent two different worlds – the developing world and the industrial world; and two social systems - socialist and capitalist systems. They have fundamentally different underlying assumptions and goals for education. Kwong (1997) pinpoints the difference between socialist and capitalist educational goals in the following words: 'the nurturing of a competitive and individualistic personality is the objective of schools in a capitalist society, whereas producing cooperative graduates willing to sacrifice for the collective is the hallmark of good socialist education' (p. 390). As China is undergoing a rapid transition from a planned socialist economy to a market socialist economy, some values from the West are being incorporated into the Chinese traditional value systems and some notions of LC are also promoted in the recent educational reform. However, the two worlds have different underlying purposes for promoting LC. China, as a collective and socialist country, promotes LC in order to increase the students' efficacy of learning so as to serve the purposes of the state development. In other words, educational reform serves to achieve the macro values of the State goals as well as to the micro values of individual development. As far as classroom pedagogy is concerned, while promoting the new values of experiential, constructive, problem-solving, and cooperative learning, it also acknowledges teachers' roles and the roles of repetitions, memorisations or factual learning. As Alexander (2000) claims, while admitting the importance of social construction of knowledge and discovery learning, there are facts to be remembered and rules to be learned. The teacher in China, a traditionally respected authoritative figure, continues to enjoy respect from the society. Teachers are believed to be role

models, learned and in control of knowledge by a majority of the people in the Chinese society although teachers themselves are becoming increasingly aware that they can no longer be in control of knowledge in the rapidly changing world of information technology. These social and cultural values explained partly why Chinese teachers believed in their roles of a knowledge provider and organiser with other new roles added, why they preferred a collective way of teaching, and why they continued to use repetitions and memorisation in teaching.

Also, as cultural traditions, children are predisposed to be attentive in class, to be disciplined, to work hard and learn what are required of them by their teachers. These are expectations not only from their teachers or schools, but from their parents, the communities, and the wider society. The social and school rituals and rules guide and monitor all learning behaviours. That is why despite a class of 50 or more, teachers can manage their teaching quite well without having to spend much time on disruptive behaviours.

In the West, historically, child-centred education was not tied to the State development to promote social good or economic good, nor was it tied as a way for children to improve efficacy of learning but more for satisfying children's interests and natural stages of development. Thus, discussions on child-centred education have focused more on children's freedom, their internal interest, and individual variability. By focusing exclusively on learners' personal aspects or their individual life goals and identity, education inevitably was in the danger of ignoring their social identity as well as social need in general (Vadeboncoeur, 1997). It is only in the recent educational reforms in both the UK and US since the 1980s that the promotion of standards of achievement has been stressed to meet the needs of social and technological development.

Institutionally, China and the West also have more differences than similarities. In the West, primary classrooms are generally more spacious and well facilitated. Subjects are often integrated rather than separated. Classes are smaller. The classroom layout is more flexible with plenty of space for children to move around and do things. Most teachers are better qualified for primary teaching and they do not have to follow prescribed textbooks. Formative assessment is a much more familiar concept and has been in practice for some time although there is now a return to more high-stake tests. On the other hand, in China, about half of the primary English teachers have no qualification in the subject they teach. In most schools, classes are

much bigger with limited space and facilities available. Teachers have to follow prescribed textbooks and a required pace of progression. All these factors may inevitably limit the use of certain ways or techniques in teaching. For example, large classes limit the possibility of attention to individual pupils; prescribed textbooks limit the possibility of selecting most appropriate teaching materials; the low age of children and their minimal language proficiency in English limit the possibility of engaging children in more turns of talk; lack of resources limits the possibility of making teaching more accessible and effective. Also, the low linguistic competence of the teachers makes them less confident about themselves in using English to teach. What is more, lack of support from the school administrative system, lack of practical training, heavy work-load, and lack of time to think were also factors hindering teachers from trying new ideas. Additional constraints were related to the reform mechanisms which control rather than free teachers' professional thinking and creativity (see 6.3.9.6).

As we can see from the above discussions, to what extent and in what forms LAMP/LC can be realised at the classroom level are determined largely by the social and cultural values as well as institutional conditions where teaching takes place. This is also why Chinese teachers' practices of LAMP/LC reflect unique Chinese characteristics. For most teachers, there is nothing wrong with the LAMP/LC principles advocated by the government but their responses to LAMP/LC in action are a direct reflection of what they see feasible for themselves as well as for their contexts. That is to say, teachers can only do what they can within both the macro and micro cultures in which they teach.

For these reasons, learner-centredness cannot be advocated and implemented with pure enthusiasm (Tudor, 1992). We have to take into consideration learner factors (such as age), cultural traditions (beliefs and practice of teaching and learning), social and practical constraints (such as large classes, imposed curriculum and prescribed textbooks as well as teacher competence), which will all exert influence on the teacher's take up of the new ideologies and on his/her choice of methodology in the classroom. Obviously, we must develop our own understanding as well as practical techniques within our particular context for achieving high standards of education for every learner. What we need is a balanced approach with a holistic consideration of the learner, learning process, and learning context as well as the broader social, economic, and political realities (Lambert and McCombs, 1997).

From what has been discussed, we can see that there does not exist one agreed view or form of practice of LC in the West, nor does there exist one agreed view or form of practice of LAMP/LC in China. What we have found is that China and the West have overall more agreements than differences regarding LC principles, while in practice both China and the West are moving towards a middle way between LC and TC, weakening the long-standing dichotomies, resulting in an emphasis on both affective and academic goals in education. However, the middle way may not necessarily involve the same 'middles' as teaching takes place in different social, cultural and institutional contexts. Nevertheless, recognizing that there may not be such a thing as a universally appropriate approach to education is not to deny that there are certain values and knowledge about children belonging to the whole of mankind (Bruner, 1996).

7.3 Towards a better understanding of LC in the Chinese context

7.3.1 Beyond a dichotomised view of learner-centred teaching

As already discussed, a majority of the teachers surveyed reported that their teaching approaches were neither fully teacher-centred nor fully learner-centred but rather at different points along the continuum with TC and LC at each end (See 5.6 and 7.1.1). The problem with the notions of LC and TC is that they are often viewed as a polarised form of dichotomies. Though dichotomising two views may help with clear thinking and may also be useful for eliciting salient features on each side, it is not very helpful for practitioners as they need operational strategies to help them put ideas into practice.

Within the dichotomy of TC and LC regarding language teaching, we can easily identify a number of antinomies that have perplexed many practitioners for years: Should teaching aim for developing children's interest and motivation or should it aim for equipping children with the basic knowledge and skills of the language? Should teachers give priority to learner differences or should they strive to help all to achieve common standards? Should teaching focus on grammar and vocabulary or should it focus on developing communication skills? Should children learn through repetitions and imitations or through discovery? And there are many more. There do not seem to be ready answers and there are unlikely to be any either. Nisbett (2003) states that it is too naive to analyse social or educational issues in a dichotomised view which separates ideology from the context. Obviously, viewing

teaching approaches as a dichotomy with LC and TC at each end is a very simplistic way of describing teaching. There is simply no one good way to teach and teaching methods can hardly be categorised into LC (good) or TC (bad) with no variations in between. Teaching is a far more complicated process and its approach often reflects a dynamic choice or decision in between the two ends of LC and TC determined by specific social, cultural, economic, educational and personal factors as well as purposes of particular learning tasks. Teachers have to make compromises within their specific contexts between caring for children's affective needs and helping them to achieve the standards of learning. Therefore, for a sound understanding of teaching and learning, we need to go beyond the dichotomised ways of looking at things. The only sensible choice, as Bruner (1996:80) suggests, is to strike a balance between the two antimonies by honouring both sides and do something midway. The possibility of a midway was also noted by Dewey (1956a) and Entwistle (1970). The truth is, at any given moment one may take some precedence, but neither can exist alone. It is not about either/or, it is about balance and appropriateness to the purpose (Bruner, 1996).

This research shows that the middle path that most Chinese teachers under study preferred to take reflects the philosophy of dialectism. The basic idea is that everything has two sides and everything is relative to everything else (Nisbett, 2003). That is to say, if there is no TC, there will not be LC. They co-exist in reality objectively as each position has its function in the real world of classrooms. However, the middle path that the Chinese teachers have taken should not be understood in the same way as to simply mixing two things together, nor should it be thought to simply avoid extremes. Instead, the middle way is, for most participants, the most reasonable approach which best represents the nature of things. The purpose is not to reject one in order to accept the other but to draw or absorb the congenial aspects from both sides to resolve contradictions and seek harmony so that a positive relationship can be established to allow exercises of merits of both sides and similarly to avoid defects of either side (Nisbett, 2003). The truth is whatever disagreement exists between TC and LC proposals, it is just a matter of emphasis. Taking either LC or TC is like the story of 'The Six Blind Man and the Elephant', each just seeing one side of the truth but not the whole story. Learning is not something either to be discovery and exploratory or to be rote-learned and memorised. Rather, we need a holistic view not a single-sided one.

As already discussed in the literature review (3.7.1), LC and TC approaches to education can also be seen in the spirit of the Tao or yin-yang principle. On the one hand, they oppose each other; on the other hand, they are dependent on each other. The key is that we should try to see things in their appropriate contexts. According to the yin-yang principle, things do not occur in isolation but are always embedded in a meaningful context 'in which the elements are constantly changing and rearranging themselves. To think about an object or event in isolation and apply abstract rules to it is to invite extreme and mistaken conclusions' (Nisbett, 2003:27). As far as curriculum change is concerned, we need to realise that changing or optimising ways of learning have to take all the elements in a context into consideration and find a way to achieve a balance in which all elements are integrated in a harmonious way to work towards the goal of better teaching and better learning. In other words, effective teaching does not necessarily mean to refuse all traditional methods but to incorporate them into the new ones to serve the purposes of effective learning in that particular context (Liu, 2005).

7.3.2 Understanding the nature and process of curriculum change

Despite a general positive attitude towards change found from a majority of the teachers under study, the multiple interpretations, confusions and diverse practices found from the study regarding LAMP/LC coupled with the fact that teachers do not always do what they believe in and they sometimes do what they do not believe in reflect the complicated nature and process of curriculum change. Fullan (2001:17) states that 'the process of educational reform is much more complex than had been anticipated' and this is because teachers have to attend simultaneously to the broad social and cultural forces, the fundamental processes of individual and institutional development and also to the new development of contemporary educational practices (Keating, 2005). Alexander (2000) also notes that change is not a wholesale process and gaps often exist between beliefs and practices. In fact, curriculum change often consists of a sequence of transformations from policy to classroom practice. Curriculum ideas are transformed first from the government policy to curriculum standards then to textbooks. Through various channels, these ideas get transformed into individual teachers' perceptions before getting further translated into classroom practices. Obviously, teachers need to develop new understanding and new mechanisms in order to translate new ideas into classroom practices. Teachers, who

are at the bottom chain of the transformation process, directly influence learners and their learning outcomes. In Bruner's (1996:84) words, 'Teachers are the ultimate change agents' for 'no educational reform can get off the ground without the active participation of the teachers'. However, teachers' decisions to undertake change and the degree to which they are able to change are often determined by both the macro and micro cultures where they teach as well as by their personal and professional capabilities.

The findings from this research showed that teachers seemed to accept new ideas quite willingly. Their difficulties lie in the question of 'how' within the constraints they face as Fullan (2001) points out that change 'requires care, commitment, and passion as well as the intellectual know-how to do something about it' (p.30). Obviously only having theories is not enough, teachers need operational strategies and practical techniques to help them cope with the realities in teaching. They needed to see ways to go beyond the constraints and achieve something not only desirable but also possible. The study of the accepted good practices provided useful ways and practical techniques for other teachers. Within similar constraints, the good teachers, instead of complaining and waiting for their context to change, went beyond the limits of those constraints as much as they could and developed their personal theories about LAMP/LC approach to teaching. They managed to find a balance between the espoused curriculum and their everyday classroom practice. This process is still on-going with teachers continuously adapting to the changes expected of them, experimenting with new ideas and sharing their experiences in these teacher training events. They tried to harmonise different forces in the best way they could. The outcome is a reconstitution of elements which are indigenous to the cultures of their own school environment – 'to produce something which is changed, but which also has its roots within the traditional' (Holliday 1994b:215).

These good teachers have provided a picture of the best practices of EFL in Chinese primary schools at the time of the study. Although they are not representative of the overall teaching reality in the whole country, they have revealed the nature and process of change and the direction towards better teaching. Such practices are still emerging and evolving with the teachers' continuous actions and reflections and with more teachers joining in. Change is both a continuation from the past and a move to the future. This is simply because old values and suppositions from one's previous experiences cannot be discontinued suddenly. Part of the past will continue to

function and part of it will be replaced by new ideas and practices. Teachers have to constantly adapt themselves to the changing social, cultural and institutional contexts and learners' needs. Adapting to change is a way of learning in itself as teachers develop new understandings about teaching and learning and adding new skills to put ideas into practice. What is happening in the primary English curriculum reform in China now is that although there are quite a lot of uncertainties about what LAMP/LC means and about change as found from both the survey (see 5.10) and the interviews (see 6.3.9.6), never before, has teaching been so much in the centre of discussions and debates; never before are teachers so enthusiastic about learning new ideas, developing new skills, and learning by observing good teaching; never before, are schools paying more attention to the needs of their students. In most places I went for my observations, I found teachers travelling long ways to take the opportunity to observe good teachers and to participate in discussions about those lessons. They raised questions, showed appreciation about some aspects of the teaching, voiced their doubts over other aspects, and expressed concerns about their own contexts whenever they had a chance. This has not only reflected teachers' enthusiasm and dedication to change but also reflected that change is new to everybody and there is no ready answer available. Lack of experience to adapt to change is a fact. Everybody, including teachers, teacher trainers, teacher educators, and administrators are faced with challenges and need to develop new ways of thinking and doing things.

The fact that developing children's metacognitive skills was not as well accepted and practised by Chinese primary teachers reveals something to be further researched. Such ideas have been one of the most important developments in recent educational and psychological research. Bruner (1996:64) points out,

> Modern pedagogy is moving increasingly to the view that the child should be aware of her own thought processes, and that is crucial for the pedagogical theorist and teacher alike to help her to become more metacognitive – to be aware of how she goes about her learning and thinking as she is about the subject matter she is studying. Achieving skill and accumulating knowledge is not enough. The learner can be helped to achieve mastery by reflecting as well upon how she is going about her job and how her approach can be improved'.

The development of such concepts and practices is a direct reflection of the educational responses to the challenges of an increasingly competitive world in the age of information technology. However, ideas as well as practices of metacognitive skills and the training of such strategies are unfamiliar to Chinese primary teachers.

They themselves were not educated to be metacognitive and they lacked experiences and skills to develop such strategies with their learners. Also, it is generally more acceptable to develop such strategies with older or adult learners but how such ideas can be put into practice with young learners who learn English as a foreign language needs further research.

As we can see from the above discussion, the process of curriculum change is a very complicated one consisting of both continuity and development within particular social and cultural contexts. A balance needs to be achieved among many elements involved in the change process and such a balance can only be achieved in practice through action and reflection by the teachers themselves. Only by doing so can the gap between theories and practices be bridged and new ideologies be translated into classroom realities. In addition, curriculum change is an on-going process and develops with better understandings and continuous explorations into practice. During such a process, principles and practice are interrelated and they should complement each other in a way that practice enriches theory while theory gets tested and developed in practice; and the tested and developed theory, in turn, further informs and guides practice. LC as an educational theory should be developed in the particular soil of practice so that it develops its own meaning by the teachers who theorise from their own context what it means and how it works in that context.

7.3.3 Towards a reconceptualisation of LC in primary EFL in China

What we have found in this study shows that for Chinese teachers, there is a clear concern over the balance between teachers' teaching and learners' learning. Their teaching in action is a highly eclectic mixture of traditional beliefs and practices combined with inspired new ideologies mediated into practices framed by social, cultural, and institutional values and contexts.

Both from the interviews and observations, we found that Chinese teachers' main concern is on how to make children learn more actively what they are expected to learn with interest and motivation. Their teaching is found to be more learning-centred rather than fully learner-centred. The well-structured lessons with clear objectives, breaking learning into smaller bits to scaffold learning, helping learners to reach a higher plane of understanding observed in the lessons all reflect a concern for learning. In this process, the teacher's job is to assist children to develop from partial and incomplete knowledge to more complete knowledge and to then applications of

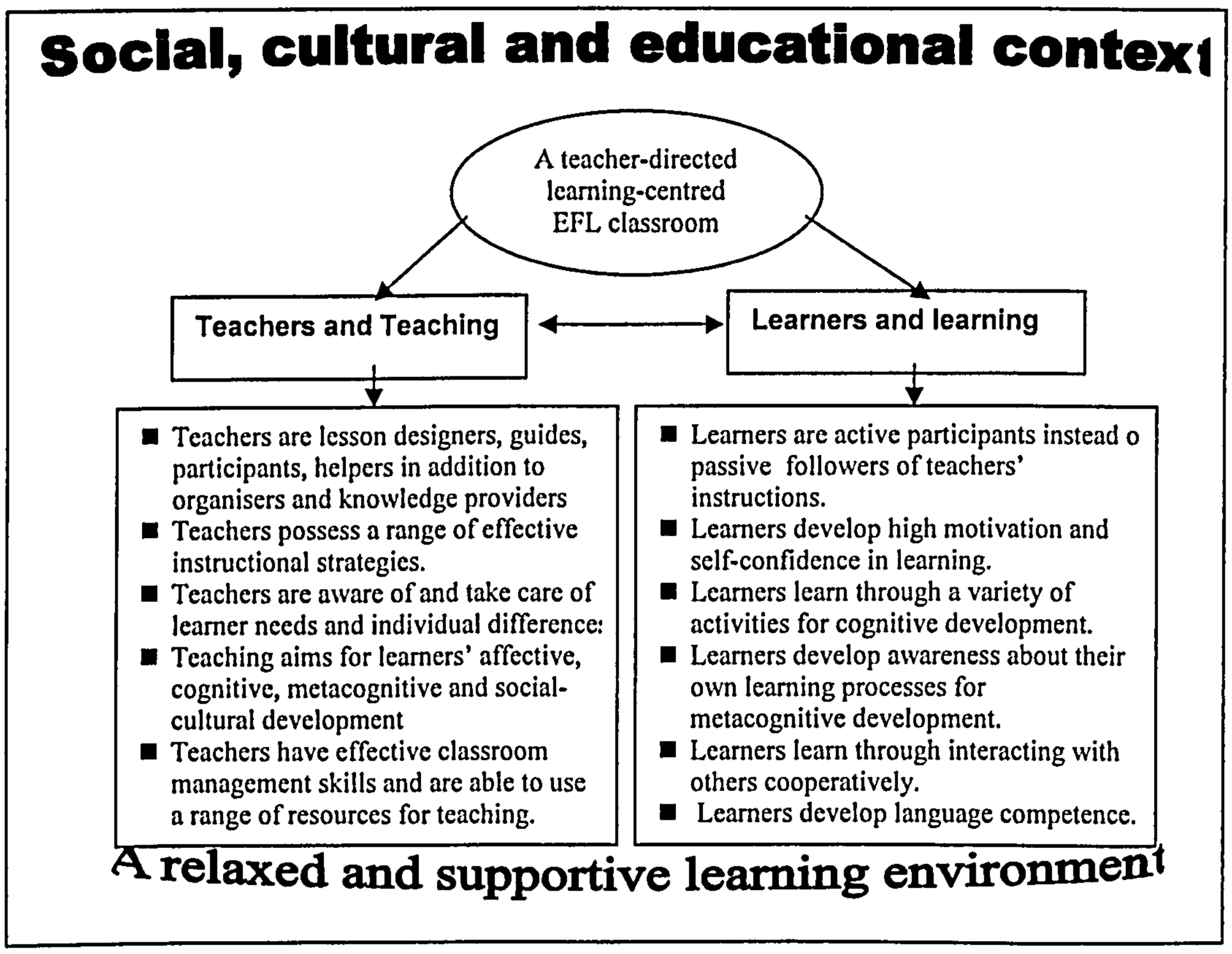
knowledge. In other words, children go to school in order to learn and to help them learn is the task of the teacher. However, focusing teaching on learning does not mean the teacher has no care for the learner. The teachers were found and observed with a strong awareness of learners' needs, their interests, and their current developmental stages while designing and conducting teaching with the goal to promote learning. Only when children are developing personal capabilities can they gain good self-image, self-confidence, and work towards self-realisation. Thus, the Chinese approach to learner-centred teaching should be more appropriately described as a teacher-directed learning-centred approach to teaching.

Based on the indicators of LAMP summarised in Section 5.11 and in Tables 5.15, 5.16 and 5.17, we can see that among all the indicators identified within 'teachers and teaching', teachers' instructive strategies received the most attention as this subcategory had the most indicators identified by the teachers. For the category of 'learners and learning', attention was given most to the development of learners' cognitive strategies. These showed what Chinese primary teachers were mostly concerned with and also mostly familiar with. These indicators together with what was observed in classrooms, carrying with them embedded social cultural and educational values – both new and old, have reflected Chinese primary teachers' reconceptualisation of LC. For them, teaching and learning are inseparable, with each party playing its due roles within the reciprocal teaching and learning process, aiming for children's overall development, under a relaxed and positive learning environment. Figure 7.1 below illustrates how different forces are involved and how they interact with each other in a reconceptualised model – a teacher-directed learning-centred approach in the Chinese primary EFL context.

Within this teacher-directed learning-centred approach, we can see that 'teachers and teaching' and 'learners and learning' are two equally important strands interacting under a relaxed and supportive learning environment. In this model, teachers who live and teach in a particular social, cultural and educational context, by adding new roles to their traditional ones, employ the most effective instructional strategies and management skills to the best of their abilities to promote children's affective, cognitive, metacognitive, social and personal development in addition to language competence with a keen awareness of learners' needs and interests, their existing knowledge and experiences, their different learning styles along with an understanding of the expected standards and embraced new ideologies. The purpose

of teaching is to enable children to reach the highest potential possible both academically and non-academically. Decisions on how to strike a balance between teaching and learning will have to be made by each individual teacher upon the social, cultural and educational context where he/she teaches. Such a context includes social and cultural factors (parent expectations, social norms and expectations), educational factors (curriculum objectives and learning contents, institutional requirements, teaching facilities and recourses, learner expectations, class size, learner age, learner motivation, etc), personal factors (linguistic and pedagogical capabilities, beliefs, training support, professional development), and ecological factors (a combinations of factors that allow or support the implementation of new ideas).

Figure 7.1 Reconceptualisation of LC in the Chinese primary EFL context



By arriving at a reconceptualisation of LC in the Chinese primary EFL context, we should not take a narrow-minded view towards education. That is to consider the implementation of the notion of LC as 'cultural deprivation' (Bruner, 1996:80). There is, in fact, no one view or form of practice of LC in the West as we have reviewed in the literature and there is no one view or form of practice of teacher-directed learning-centred approach to English language teaching in China either as shown from the data. Every teacher will need to make their own decisions as to what degree

or level of teacher direction and learning-centredness is going to be, relative to his/her own teaching context, but we may all embrace, to a certain degree, some universally shared principles about the nature of children and the goals of education.

CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

In this chapter, conclusions are drawn based on the analyses and discussions of the data through both the quantitative and qualitative methods. Major contributions of this study are presented followed by implications for teachers, teacher educators, curriculum reform in China as well as for other developing countries. Limitations and proposals for future research are suggested to conclude the whole study.

8.1 Conclusions

Data revealed that Chinese primary EFL teachers in this study overwhelmingly welcomed the changes from teacher-centred traditional education to more learner-centred approaches to teaching English to young children. They embraced the ideology for children's overall development, particularly for its emphasis on satisfying children's affective needs, which were largely missing in teacher-centred traditional classrooms where children's cognitive development was the main focus. Their beliefs in the goals of language teaching and the roles of language teachers reflect that they prefer an integrated approach to teaching by playing both LC and TC roles.

The reported practices from 1000 teachers and interviews with some teachers showed that most Chinese EFL primary teachers preferred a middle-path – TDLC. They adopted a hybrid of teaching methods and techniques in teaching English in primary schools. They were found at different positions along the continuum between TC and LC with a very small number claiming their teaching approaches fitted at each end of the continuum. The reasons lie mainly in the constraints they faced in their teaching context, such as prescribed textbooks, large classes, lack of resources, limited class time, heavy workload, young age of children, and teachers' personal capabilities, as well as time given for the teachers to think and reflect on their teaching.

The good practices of the 18 teachers revealed some typical instructional characteristics of EFL teaching in Chinese primary schools although their personal teaching styles varied from one to another. It was observed that their teaching reflected a strong collective culture with whole class activities as the predominant forms of teaching. At the same time, they tried to cater for individual learner differences by using a variety of techniques during whole class teaching. Children

were seen socialised into rules, routines, and rituals of schooling in the learning context and could be seen making progress from incomplete knowledge and uncertainty to a rather more secure understanding with the old structures being revised and new structures and vocabulary being presented, practised and gradually internalised through a variety of language practice tasks. Warm and supportive classroom atmosphere was found in all the classrooms observed. There were clear expectations of children in school, who were supposed to be attentive, active, and participatory either as an individual or together as a whole class.

It was evident from this research that English language teaching in Chinese primary schools as represented by the good practices is shifting its emphasis from the explicit teaching of grammatical and vocabulary knowledge to activity-based experiential learning, paying more attention to children's interests, self-confidence, and active participation in the process of learning. The middle path to curriculum change harmonises the promoted LAMP/LC principles with the existing traditional social, cultural and educational values, resulting in a reconceptualisation of LC in the Chinese context. Such an approach integrates teaching and learning into one holistic process with proper stress on teachers and teaching for enhancing the development of learners and learning.

8.2 Main contributions of the study

This study has made a number of contributions to the understanding of learner-centred ideology both in the West and in China. The first contribution lies in the fact that this study is the first of its kind in China investigating primary teachers' perceptions and practices with regard to learner-centredness in terms of both scale and depth with 1000 teachers surveyed and 18 lessons of good practices observed and quite a number of teachers interviewed. The study which was undertaken at the beginning stage of curriculum change and also the beginning of a large scale promotion of English in primary schools (from 2001 onwards) has provided a picture of what the contexts and situations were at the time of the study with demographic information as well as teachers' attitudes towards change, preferred teaching approaches, difficulties encountered and teaching methods used in primary EFL contexts, serving as an important baseline study for future research to examine if there are continuous changes in both primary EFL teachers' perceptions and practices with regard to LAMP as the curriculum reform expands and deepens and conducting

similar studies with junior and senior high school teachers to gain further insights into the process of curriculum change at different phases.

This study is unique also because previous research debating on the appropriateness of Western ideologies or methods, such as CLT, in the Chinese contexts were all based on theoretical reasoning or 'anecdotal evidence' (Rao, 2002:86) or surveys on a small number of teachers or learners about their perceptions of CLT and its applicability in their teaching and learning contexts. For example, Burnaby and Sun (1989) interviewed 24 Chinese teaches; Anderson (1993) presented some anecdotal comments from a number of previous researches in the 1980s; and Rao (2002) investigated views of 30 EFL learners regarding CLT. They all concluded that CLT was inappropriate for the Chinese contexts which, I believe, over-simplified the reality for they have all overlooked how teachers teach and how students learn in real-life classrooms. Besides, the small number of subjects involved could not have possibly represented the views of most Chinese teachers who teach in diverse contexts with various learner groups. Moreover, as most studies were done in the 1980s and 1990s, situations have changed a great deal along with the rapid social economic development in China since then. The need for English and views about language and language teaching also changed tremendously. Thus, this study is the one to fill the gap in the process of change with a much larger scale of survey and in-depth classroom studies to reveal more representative perceptions and practices of LC in the primary profession of ELT in China.

Secondly, it has made an important contribution to ways of understanding LC in developing countries with detailed analyses of both teachers' perceptions and reported practices and also teachers' classroom behaviours with their assumptions and beliefs underpinning their practices. The research has led to a reconceptualisation of learner-centred teaching in the Chinese primary EFL context – a teacher-directed learning-centred approach (see Figure 7.1) which reflects a more integrated theory of teaching-and-learning. It adds to the limited number of studies on learner-centred curriculum reform in developing countries done so far (e.g. O'Sullivan, 2004; Brodie, Lelliott, and Davis, 2002; Croft, 2002)), providing evidence with empirical data to the bank of research on educational reform advocating LC following a top-down approach in developing countries.

The third contribution of the study is methodological. The combination of data collection methods through questionnaires, observations and interviews has provided

multiple perspectives for the researcher to study teachers' beliefs and their teaching behaviours both at a large scale and in-depth into classrooms. Such mixed methods are recognised as lacking in social and educational research (Hausman, 2000. cf Gorard and Taylor, 2004). The mixed methods complemented each other to have provided a fuller picture of the kind of teaching approaches and classroom pedagogies that most Chinese teachers under study were taking and developing. The use of pair/group work is a case in point, e.g. A large majority of the teachers both believed in and reportedly practised pair/group work in teaching, but classroom observations showed that pair/group work was done only very briefly with whole-class teaching being predominant. The combination of methods in investigating the matter has led to more convincing findings.

The fourth contribution lies in the in-depth study of 18 teachers acknowledged as good practitioners in primary EFL in China. The classroom observations are particularly valuable in the sense that good practices have been clearly documented and systematically analysed with distinctive features identified which promotes LAMP in the Chinese context at the beginning stage of the curriculum reform. Although most lessons observed were public lessons for teacher training purposes, they were not the same as demonstration lessons or prize-winning teaching competitions. Such kinds of public lessons have been frequently organised by local educational authorities as ways for teachers to share and learn from each other and as ways to promote curriculum change, which is uniquely a cultural practice. The present research, by taking advantage of such opportunities, captured, in real teacher training contexts, the presentations of good practices and views of teachers brought in by such an event. These observation studies have made a direct contribution to the understanding of classroom teaching and learning embedded in the specific social, cultural institutional contexts. Such classroom research has been recognised as lacking (Sroll and Hastings, 1996) particularly in developing countries as most of the research into the classrooms has focused on the industrial world and 'studies with descriptions and interpretations of classroom practices in the developing world are long overdue' (Pontefract and Hardman (2005:88). Bruner (1996:86) also states that, 'it is surprising and somewhat discouraging how little attention has been paid to the intimate nature of teaching and school learning in the debate on education' over the past years. Therefore, the study has not only enriched our understanding about classroom teaching in China but also contributed to the world of research in general.

The findings from good teaching also have important implications for improving teacher training and teacher education programmes in China as well as for other developing countries to support teachers in the process of curriculum change.

8.3 Implications

8.3.1 Implications for teachers and teacher educators

This research finds that the profession of primary English teachers in China is composed of mostly young female teachers, many of whom are not trained in the subject of English and also many are not necessarily trained pedagogically to teach in primary schools. Although the research shows that most teachers love their job dearly and are committed to teaching English to children, the lack of linguistic and communicative competence in the target language and lack of training in teaching children may inevitably inhibit teachers from developing effective strategies to mediate between new ideologies and their own teaching practices. Therefore, teacher training should focus on improving primary teachers' linguistic and communicative competence, and developing their pedagogical skills for teaching English to children based on a good knowledge about how children think and learn and particularly on how children learn a foreign language as discussed by Cameron (2001).

It is also found from the study that teachers frequently encounter ideological contradictions in their work and often find themselves involved in difficult choices but having to make compromises. Curriculum change presents big challenges to all the teachers and there are no ready answers available. What is clear is that teaching approaches will need to be flexible, both with regard to the needs of particular classroom situations and the strengths and preferences of individual teachers (Sroll and Hastings, 1996). Also, Fullan (2001:108) points out, 'significant change is doomed to be accompanied by certain amount of ambiguity, ambivalence, and uncertainty for the individual'. Both teachers and teacher educators need to understand that 'effective implementation is a process of clarification' (ibid) or constant 'search for understanding' that may have 'no ultimate answer' (Stacey, 1990:282, cf. Fullan, 1993:20). As such clarification is likely to be reached through reflective practice, teachers need to be supported emotionally and professionally to engage themselves in sharing views through reflective teaching and in learning to accept ambiguity and uncertainties during the process of change while trying to search for possible answers.

At the same time, teachers need practical or operational techniques to enable them to put theory into practice. They need to be helped to see how to go beyond the constraints they face to help children learn English with high interest and motivation leading to better learning results. As workable solutions can only be developed from the context where teachers teach, teacher trainers and teacher educators should work in new ways. They should work together with teachers in classroom to help them develop strategies that can work for their context. The current research with findings from good teachers has provided valuable resources for both teachers and teacher trainers to identify those strategies that may work for other teachers and also areas for improvement, e.g. time on pair/group work, ways to engage children in meaningful repetitions, and operational strategies to develop children's metacognitive awareness and skills. As Sroll and Hastings (1996:1) argue, 'teaching situations have important aspects in common and it is therefore possible to take lessons from one situation which is applicable to another'.

Although developing new skills and techniques is important and necessary for successful implementation of the new curriculum, we should also realise that teaching is more than a skilled activity or practical accomplishment. It is also 'a thoughtful activity which demands considerable intellectual engagement and reflective and self-critical analysis' (Sroll and Hastings, 1996:1). In other words, teachers need to be helped to theorise from their own practices what works and what does not. Only through actions and reflections can they reach a deeper level of understanding about teaching which, in turn, guides further actions. Such a theorizing process is a dynamic, constant, experimental, and continuous effort, in which teachers have to harmonise different demands and struggle to be themselves. Guided by the espoused principles, they need to find ways to go beyond the limits of constraints as much as they can to achieve what they desire to achieve through continuous actions and reflections. It is also very important for teachers and teacher educators to become aware that change takes time and teachers need time to think and to reflect. An ecological environment to support teachers for change is crucial for teachers' continuous effort to change.

The fact that good primary teachers were found not to be paying attention to developing children's metacognitive strategies needs attention from teacher trainers and teacher educators. Such strategies have been recognised as the most important strategies for life-long learners in the 21st century. They are also stated clearly in the new English curriculum document as one of the goals for teaching English to learners

from primary to senior high school. Therefore, how to help primary teachers develop more awareness as well as pedagogical strategies to integrate the development of children's metacognitive skills with the teaching of English is of particular importance. Teachers may need the experience to develop their own metacognitive strategies before they can understand what they mean. So teacher training/education programmes need to include metacognitive strategy training component in their training programmes and give teachers first hand experiences by engaging them to develop their own metacognitive strategies. Through reflections and discussion they can then try to develop ways to mediate such ideas and practices into their own teaching.

To make all of the above to happen, teacher trainers and teacher educators have a crucial role to play. However, whether they are ready to provide the support needed is another pragmatic issue to be addressed by curriculum planners, as Wedell (2003) argues that one of the reasons for the limited success of curriculum change is the planner's failure to adequately consider what kind of support systems need to be established and how and who can provide such support to teacher trainers. Obviously, trainer training should be the first step towards successful preparation of a capable profession and an effective support system to enable more classroom teachers to gradually achieve what is intended by the new curriculum.

8.3.2 Implications for curriculum change in developing countries

The main implication for developing countries is that while implementing change in education, we should not blindly accept or abruptly reject any proposed values or ideas but be critical when trying to incorporate these ideas into our local contexts. There are educational values and truth that are embraced by all human races which are in fact aspirations we all hold. Therefore, we should not take a narrow minded view to only see our own cultures and refuse anything that come from the 'others'. The point of departure should be what teachers can do in the context where they teach for the better development of our children. Teachers are the ones who will need to decide how to mediate between educational aspirations and educational practices within their teaching context. As the current research shows, Chinese primary teachers did not give up everything they had before but improved them by integrating new ideas and by changing their practices to the best of their abilities for the benefit of their children. The best practices are those that can harmonise these universally

embraced valued into the local cultural and economic contexts. We need aspirations for creating better education for our children and for our countries; we also need to put our feet on our own soil to create our own pedagogies which help our children to move towards a better future of mankind. It is a waste of time to simply argue and debate about which approach is the best or most suitable for which context, it is important that we go into the classrooms and work together to find out about our needs and constraints we face and work out solutions that we are able to handle to improve teaching and learning in our specific context.

What also needs our attention is that certain conditions are prerequisite for successful implementation of a new curriculum, as Fullan (2001) notes, 'success is 25% having the right ideas and 75% establishing effective processes that themselves are no guarantee since each situation is unique' (p.90). It is worth noting that teachers from this study expressed their feelings of tensions with time and lack of resources. They felt rather frustrated for the fact that they simply did not have sufficient time to think, to reflect, to learn, to share, and to innovate and there were not sufficient resources for them to do what they wanted to do. The time factor has been noted by a number of scholars which recognises that not only does change takes time but also crucial is the time available for teachers to cope with change as they often face various demands and numerous additional responsibilities other than teaching (Guthrie, 1990; Fullan, 1993, 2001; Alexander, 2000). Besides, examination systems in many educational contexts are more often than not inconsistent with what is promoted in the innovation. All these mean that innovation involves more than just good proposals but effective management mechanisms and support systems in the process of change. In the case of unsuccessful implementation, teachers are often the ones to be blamed for not being capable; while the problem lies largely with the ways in which innovation is managed and what support is provided. Therefore, countries that promote educational change need to develop good support systems and create favourable contexts for teachers to participate in innovations instead of simply promoting abstract desires without grounded probabilities.

8.3.3 Limitations and future research

What needs to be recognised is that this study took place at a time when the new curriculum was just beginning to be implemented (during 2004 and 2005) and the views and practices are continuing to evolve and develop in a dynamic and

continuous way. Therefore, the picture of the reform described in this thesis may not reflect fully what is happening when the thesis comes to a close.

Secondly, China is a large country. Primary English in China is a new subject on the national curriculum (since 2001) and offered as a foreign language with different amount of hours and different beginning levels in different parts of the country. There are still places where English have not yet been offered due to shortage of teachers. Therefore, any lesson at any one point in any particular location will not be representative of the overall primary English in the country and perhaps cannot even reflect the overall teaching capability of that particular teacher observed as each teacher was observed only once. More research is needed in schools and classrooms in different parts of the country to see how other teachers have managed to cope with change by going beyond all the constraints so as to add to the repertoires of good practices for China's primary English and also for other developing countries as experiences or lessons. Also follow-up studies are needed to see developments and changes in Chinese primary teachers' beliefs and practices as curriculum reform continues to roll on and evolve.

Lack of time and space prevented more in-depth study of the rich data collected through different sources in the current research. Continuous research can be carried out by exploiting further the data at hand. For example, a further study can be done to examine how each of the 18 teachers theorised their teaching and what pedagogical principles are behind them, and what makes them similar and different in their ways of teaching. Secondly, the roles played by textbooks in either facilitating or hindering curriculum change can also be further studied. Thirdly, teachers' questioning strategies as well as the nature of children's questions can be further explored. How pair and group tasks are designed and used and how interactions or creativity actually evolved and developed within group work are also of great importance to reveal deeper levels of understanding of classroom teaching and learning. Another area of research is the whole school approach to curriculum change because these good teachers are found all coming from very supportive school contexts. The study of their school particularities and cultures may yield more interesting insights into the factors that influence teachers' beliefs and behaviours during the process of curriculum change.

As this study focused purely on teachers, research involving children and their views about their learning experiences regarding English as a foreign language will

be of importance to reveal the other side of the story as children are the end consumers of this curriculum change. Also, comparative studies on patterns and features of foreign language teaching between/among developing countries and also between/among countries of the West and the East will be of significance to find out how different contexts affect teachers' perceptions and practices.

Finally, a few limitations regarding the research methods need to be acknowledged. First, interview, questionnaire and other data gathering instruments were translated between Chinese and English. All translations were done by me with no other possible objective check due to constraints regarding time and human recourse. Secondly, I was fully aware of the fact that all the data in the analysis has been interpreted through the optic of me as a researcher, and that this might not exclude possible bias or personal points of view as it was inevitably a unique experience of my own educational and professional background. Therefore, data was not just collected but constructed by the researcher (Buckingham and Saunders, 2004). However, constructing data is not the same thing as making it up. 'Provided we are careful and methodical, the result can provide us with reliable information and insights about the social world' (ibid: 152). Last but not the least, in conducting interviews, my roles as a teacher trainer and curriculum developer might have inevitably influenced the responses I got as reminded by Buckingham and Saunders (2004). Also, in a few occasions when the school heads were present during the focus group interviews, teachers might have felt reserved to talk about the unfavourable conditions they experienced in their school contexts.

To conclude, there is no universal truth in any one approach to education as contexts vary and values and goals vary. It is a matter of adjusting positions constantly to accommodate the social, educational and personal needs in the context where one teaches, where one's ability permits, parents accept and school leaders support. However, as 'we need to respect the uniqueness of local identities and experience' (Bruner, 1996:70), there is a danger that 'appropriate methodology' (Holliday, 1994b) may be used as an icon to be grabbed against anything that is 'other' or 'others', which only helps to reject anything outside one's culture, or anything that is not 'ours' (Bruner, 1996:70). In other words, we should not blindly accept or reject anything from anther culture, whether East or West. The East and the West should each recognise things that are missing from their own cultures and learn something from the other. As already discussed in the literature review, the East and

the West are now coming towards each other in their respective educational reforms with each taking something from the other to complement what is lacking in their own educational values and practices. We must accept that there are certain values that belong to a wider world culture as universal truth but at the same time, we should not forget the particularities of our local cultures. With our feet standing firm on our local soil, we should try to integrate all good values and truth from different cultures for a better education of our children.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Six Underlying Principles of the New English Curriculum

1. Aim education for all students, and emphasise quality-oriented education

The English curriculum aims education for all students and stresses quality-oriented education. The new standards particularly show concerns over students' affective needs as well as other learning needs in order to stimulate their interests in learning, help them experience the sense of success, and gain self-confidence in learning. Its overall objective is to develop students' comprehensive abilities in using the language and to improve their cultural quality, to develop their practical skills, as well as to cultivate their creative spirit.

2. Promote learner-oriented teaching, and respect individual differences.

Students' overall development is the motivation and goal of the English curriculum. Therefore, its objectives, the teaching process, the assessment procedures as well as the development of teaching resources should all reflect the principle of learners-as-main-participants. Classroom teaching should become a process during which students are guided by the teachers in constructing knowledge, developing skills, being active in thinking, demonstrating personal characters, developing intelligence and broadening their views and visions. Teaching should take full consideration of students' individual differences in the learning processes and their learning styles and teachers should be flexible in using teaching methods, resources and ways of assessment to make learning accessible for all students.

3. Develop competence-based objectives, and allow flexibility and adaptability.

The overall aim of the curriculum for nine-year compulsory education is to develop students' comprehensive abilities in language use. Such abilities are grounded in the development of language skills, language knowledge, affects, cultural awareness and learning strategies. The two connected English curriculums for nine-year compulsory education and for senior high school education divide the English teaching objectives into nine levels. Each level is described in terms of what students can do with the language. It is thus designed to reflect the progressive nature of students' language development during the process of school education so as to ensure the integrity, flexibility and openness of the curriculum.

4. Pay close attention to the learning process, and advocate experiential learning and participation.

Modern foreign language teaching emphasises the learning process and advocates the use of different teaching approaches and methods for the purposes of facilitating students' language development. During the process of learning English, students should be encouraged to discover rules of the language, master gradually language knowledge and skills, develop positive attitudes and effective learning strategies so as to gradually become more autonomous learners under teachers' guidance through experience, practice, participatation, exploration and cooperation.

5. **Attach particular importance to formative assessment, and give special attention to the development of competence.**

   The assessment for the nine-year compulsory education should be geared towards stimulating students' interests and cultivating their autonomy in learning. The system should include both formative and summative assessment with formative assessment playing a primary role, paying special attention to students' language performance and achievements during the learning process. Assessment should be made to facilitate students' interests and self-confidence in learning. Summative assessment should focus on assessing students' overall language ability and the ability to use the language. Assessment should function positively for students to develop language competence and healthy personalities; for teachers to improve their teaching qualities and for curriculum planners to improve the English curriculum.

6. **Optimise learning resources, and maximise opportunities for learning and using the language.**

   English curriculum requires that teachers properly utilise and develop teaching resources so as to provide rich and healthy resources that are practical, lively, and up-to-date for students' learning. Teachers should make full use of various resources such as videos, television programmes, books, magazines and the Internet so as to expand the opportunities for students to learn and use the language. Teachers should also encourage students to take part in exploring and utilisating resources for their own learning.

The above is my translation from: English Curriculum Standards for Nine-Year Compulsory Education (Revised Version). (Forthcoming). The Ministry of Education, China. pp.2-3. Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press.

Appendix 2 Competence-based Standards for Primary English

		Performance Descriptions
LEVEL 1	Listen and Do	♦ Be able to recognise and point at objects or pictures according to what is heard. ♦ Be able to understand and react to simple classroom instructions. ♦ Be able to do things according to instructions, such as pointing, colouring, drawing pictures, acting physically, doing hand craft. ♦ Be able to understand and react to simple English stories with the help of pictures or actions.
	Speak and Sing	♦ Be able to imitate from the recordings. ♦ Be able to greet each other in simple English. ♦ Be able to exchange simple personal information, such as names and age. ♦ Be able to express simple feeling or emotions, such as likes and dislikes. ♦ Be able to guess meaning or say the words from acting or miming. ♦ Be able to sing 15-20 children' songs and 15-20 nursery rhymes. ♦ Be able to speak out words or phrases according to pictures or printed words.
	Play and Act	♦ Be able to play games in English and communicate with each other using simple English ♦ Be able to do simple role plays in English ♦ Be able to perform English songs and act out simple English plays, e.g. the Little Red Riding Hood.
	Read and Write	♦ Be able to recognise words printed with pictures. ♦ Be able to recognised objects first and then understand words describing them. ♦ Be able to read and understand simple picture stories in English. ♦ Be able to write correctly letters and words that have been learned.
	Audio and Visual	♦ Be able to follow simple English cartoon films or other English programmes at a similar level ♦ The time spent for audio and visual should be no less than 10 hours per school year with an average of 20-25 minutes a week.

* The competence-based requirements are designed into two levels for primary school pupils from age 8-12. Level One covers Grade 3 & 4, Level Two covers Grade 5 & 6.

		Performance Descriptions
LEVEL 2	Listening	♦ Be able to understand simple spoken English or recorded English. ♦ Be able to understand questions in classroom activities. ♦ Be able to understand and react properly to repeatedly-used instructions. ♦ Be able to understand simple English stories supported with pictures.
	Speaking	♦ Be able to pronounce English clearly with the right intonation. ♦ Be able to make short dialogues on familiar personal or family topics. ♦ Be able to use very common daily expressions e.g. for greeting, farewell, gratitude and apology. ♦ Be able to tell simple stories with the help of the teacher.
	Reading	♦ Be able to recognise learned words and phrases. ♦ Be able to pronounce simple words according rules of spelling. ♦ Be able to read and understand simple instructions in the textbook. ♦ Be able to read and understand simple information from cards. ♦ Be able to read simple stories or short texts with the help of pictures, and form the initial habit of reading words in their sense groups. ♦ Be able to read aloud correctly the learned texts or stories.
	Writing	♦ Be able to write sentences based on given models. ♦ Be able to write out simple greetings. ♦ Be able to write captions for pictures or simple descriptions for objects. ♦ Be able to use capital and small letters in writing and use correct punctuations for simple sentences.
	Playing and Acting Audio and Visual	♦ Be able to play games in English according to instructions. ♦ Be able to perform stories or short plays with the help of the teacher. ♦ Be able to perform simple rhymes or poems 30-40 (including Level 1). ♦ Be able to sing English songs 30-40 (including Level 1) ♦ Be able to follow simple English cartoon films or other English programmes at a similar level. The time spent for audio-visual should be no less than 10 hours a school year with an average of 20-25 minutes a week..

Vocabulary requirement: 600-700 words based on topics such as numbers, colours, time, weather, food, clothes, toys, animals and plants, body parts, personal information, family, school, friends, entertainment and sports, holidays, etc.

Appendix 3 Child-centredness – Historical meanings and their implications

		Child-centred claims	References	Implications for education
Historical meanings	Nature of children	Children are naturally good, innocent and guiltless. They are naturally active, both physically and mentally and are full of curiosity. 'Children will always do anything that keeps them moving freely' (Rousseau, 1762:105). Children 'are born capable of learning (Rousseau, 1762:28). Children display exploratory behaviour quite independent of adult intervention. They are different from adults and they have their 'own ways of seeing, thinking and feeling' (Rousseau, 1762:54).	Rousseau, 1762; Pestalozzi, in Green, 1912, 1914; Pestalozzi, in Heafford, 1967.	♦ Children should be allowed the freedom to move around, to do what interests them and to play and explore in natural environments. ♦ Learning should not be forced and the child should not be made anxious. ♦ Education should start by finding out what interest children and build on their natural interest and needs.
	Natural stages of development	Children are not little adults. There is a natural course of development in children both physically and mentally.	Rousseau, 1762 in Darling, 1994	♦ Education should follow children's natural stages of development. They should not be taught the things that are beyond their grasp and should not be forced to learn things that they are not ready for.

	Nature of learning	Children are naturally geared towards learning and discovering. Instead of learning through words, children should learn through activity and through things (Rousseau, 1762; Pestalozzi, in Green, 1912, 1914). 'Let them learn nothing from books which they can learn from experience' (Rousseau, 1762:214) 'Work or play are all one to him, his games are his work; he knows no difference' (Rousseau, 1762:126). Play is a form of creative activity through which children learn knowledge and the world around him (Froebel, 1886, in Lawrence, 1952).	Rousseau, 1762; Darling, 1994; Pestalozzi in Green, 1912; Froebel, 1886 in Lawrence, 1952.	♦ Learning should be experience-based. ♦ Children should be allowed to develop their own ideas, discover things, reason for themselves, and draw conclusions. ♦ Play can be used as a way of teaching and learning through which children develop new knowledge. ♦ Some concrete techniques such as real objects or toys can be used as teaching equipments to create visual experiences and playful contexts for learning.
	Individual Differences	Children vary individually in interest, needs, and speed of development	Rousseau, 1762 in Darling, 1994; Pestalozzi, in Green, 1914; in Heafford, 1967.	♦ Education needs to be individualised, meeting children's individual needs.
	Whole child	Education should focus on the development of the child's whole personality: moral, mental as well as physical.	Pestalozzi, in Green, 1914; in Heafford, 1967.	♦ Education should not only focus on the intellectual development of children. It should promote all-round development of each child.
	Affective needs	Respect the child and also teach him to love others (Rousseau, 1762). 'Every human being, even as a child, must be recognised, acknowledged, and fostered as a necessary and essential member of humanity' (Froebel, 1886, cf. Lawrence, 1952:21); Children are like plants, who need to be cared.	Rousseau, 1762; Froebel, 1886, in. Lawrence, 1952	♦ Teaching should take a humanistic approach, respecting and caring for every child. ♦ Teachers are like gardeners who should create favourable conditions for the plants to grow.

Appendix 4 Learner-centredness – Modern meanings and their implications with classroom indicators

Modern meanings	Child/Learner-centred ideas		References	Implications for education	Possible Classroom Indicators
	Nature of children	Children are 'natural doers, makers and creators' (Darling, 1994:3).They are active inventors and discoverers. They are active in making sense of the world around them and they act and learn through experiences.	Darling, 1994; CACE, 1967; Donaldson, 1978.	♦ Schools should cater for children's nature by providing opportunities and materials for a range of physical activity and creative work. ♦ No advances in policy, no acquisition of new equipment have their desired effect unless they are in harmony with the nature of the child, unless they are fundamentally acceptable to him (CACE, 1967: Para.9).	♦ Children are allowed to move around and to pursue their own interests with the teacher providing necessarily help. Children are allowed to follow their own interests and sit around tables in groups. ♦ Children have opportunities to take initiatives on their own and be involved in creative work..
	Natural stages of development	Children's development is a gradual and 'natural' progression. (Dewey, 1956a, 1956b; Darling, 1994:3) following ordered stages which are the same for all children (Piaget, in Donaldson, 1978). Until a child is ready to take a particular step forward, it is a waste of time to try to teach him to take it (Piaget, in Donaldson; CACE, 1967: Para.75).	Dewey, 1956a, 1956b; Piaget, in Donaldson, 1978; CACE, 1967; Darling, 1994.	♦ Education should be based on an understanding of children's natural physical and cognitive developmental stages and the curriculum should be determined by children's developmental needs and capabilities. ♦ Teachers should understand the features of children's stages of development and teach only when children are ready for it.	♦ Teachers understand individual children's developmental stages and allow children to develop according to their own speed with tasks that meet their level of development. ♦ Teachers teach at the level of children's language and cognitive development.

	Nature of learning	Learning process is a process of active thinking and problem solving with the ultimate goal of understanding. Work and play are not opposite but complementary. children learn best when they are clear about the goals to be reached and the means to reach the goals (Donaldson, 1978). Learning is a process of knowledge construction on the basis of experience and prior knowledge.	Dewey, 1956b; 1916:191; Donaldson, 1978; Piaget, 1970.	♦ Teachers should carefully scaffold new ideas and concepts and develop learners' new knowledge based on what they already know. ♦ Schools should provide opportunities for children to learn by probing, investigation, imagination, creativity and communication. ♦ There must be clear goals and purposes in the learning tasks given to children. ♦ Play can be used as a way of learning.	♦ Children develop knowledge and understanding on the basis of their prior knowledge and experiences. ♦ Children learn with an understanding of the goals and intentions of the tasks given; ♦ Children learn through playful activities, such as TPR activities, games, projects, role plays. ♦ Children have opportunities to explore problems, take initiatives; express their personal ideas, opinions and feelings.
	Social and Affective	Children learn best when they feel secure and respected. Learning is best achieved through interactions with someone who is more able and capable. Children learn through interactions with the social environment and in participating in group work and project work.	Vygotsky, 1978; CACE, 1967; Darling, 1994.	♦ Adults should have an appreciation of and a respect for children and for their ways of learning. ♦ Children should be given opportunities to work in groups and in projects.	♦ Children are respected and motivated to learn. ♦ Children work in pair/groups and participate in project work cooperatively.

	Instruction and Assessment	Education has 'as its aim at every stage an added capacity of growth (Dewey, 1916:54, cf. Darling, 1994:27) It will do harm if children are left with their purposes and interests as they stand (Dewey, 1956a:15). ' the question of education is the question of taking hold of children's interests and their activities, of giving them direction. Through direction, through organised use, they are helped toward valuable results, instead of being left to merely impulsive expression' (Dewey, 1956b:36).	Dewey, 1956a; 1916 in Darling, 1994; Dewey (1956b:36).	♦ Teaching should not only be satisfied with making use of children's interests or curiosity; learning should be facilitated and encouraged so as to help children to move to a higher level of understanding ♦ Teachers' instructions are crucial for motivating learning and thinking. ♦ The teacher is not an instructor of passive learners, nor a tester, nor a referee, nor an authority on a particular subject, but someone who can direct and organise learning, providing resources (Dewey, 1956a). ♦ Formal test should not be frequently used to assess children's learning.	♦ Teachers play the role of a facilitator instead of an authority. ♦ Children, with the teacher's help, develop new understanding based on their existing base of knowledge. ♦ The teacher organises learning and provides resources and good environment for learning. ♦ Formal tests are infrequently used.
	Integrated curriculum	Knowledge does not fall into neatly separate compartments, categories or disciplines.	Dewey, 1956a; CACE, 1967; Barth, 1975 in Alexander, 1984	♦ Primary school should teach based on an integrated curriculum	♦ Children learn math, science, music and language, etc. all in one lesson in an integrated way.

	Individual differences	The speed of development for individual children may not be the same although they all followed a pre-determined stages of development (Piaget, in Donaldson, 1978:145).Individual differences between children of the same age are so great that any class, however, homogeneous it seems, must always, be treated as a body of children needing individual and different attention (CACE: 1967:Para. 75).	CACE, 1967; Piaget 1970; Walberg and Thomas, 1971 in Alexander, 1984; King, 1978;	♦ Learning is subordinate to each child's level of development (Piaget, in Donaldson, 1978:145) ♦ Children's personal style of thinking and acting should be recognised and respected (Walberg and Thomas, 1971, in Alexander, 1984). ♦ Teachers should adapt their methods to individual needs and allow choices for children to make their own decisions for what and how they learn. Whole class teaching should be reduced.	♦ There is time for one-to-one interaction between the T and each individual child. ♦ Children are given opportunities to choose what they want to learn and how to learn. ♦ Teachers respect each individual child and show understanding of their differences. ♦ Teachers adjust teaching accordingly, allowing children to work with their own interests and pace of learning.
	School and Society	Schools are necessary arrangements for teaching and learning and school should not be separated from society. Instead, it should reflect all aspects of society.	Dewey, 1956a, 1956b; Barth 1975, in Alexander, 1984;	♦ What children learn should reflect the life experiences of the society. Children should be provided with a rich environment and a wide range of experiences in learning.	♦ Schools resemble small societies with workshops and laboratories. The content of learning is closely related to children's life experiences.
	Positive learning environment	Children think and learn best in informal, supportive, and meaningful context which is familiar and non-threatening (Donaldson, 1978). Emotional, social and intellectual aspects are closely intertwined in mental growth: the child is a total personality. Emotional life provides the spur and in many ways gives meaning to experience (CACE, 1967, Para.65).	Donaldson, 1978; CACE, 1967;	♦ Teachers need to create a supportive and non-threatening context for children to think and learn. ♦ Education should focus on the whole child instead of just his intellectual growth. Their emotional needs should also be taken care of.	♦ There is care, love, and respect for children in the classroom. ♦ There is a good relationship between the teacher and children. ♦ There is a specially designed environment with space, resources and small classes

Appendix 5 Learner-centredness – Contemporary meanings and their implications with classroom indicators

Child-centred ideas			References	Implications for education	Possible classroom indicators
Contemporary meanings	Nature of learners	♦ Learners have distinctive perspectives contributed to by their history, the environment, their interests and goals, their beliefs, their ways of thinking, and the like. (Lambert and McCombs, 1997:9). ♦ Successful learners are active, goal-directed, self-regulating, and assume personal responsibility for contributing to their own learning (APA, 1997).	Lambert and McCombs, 1997; APA, 1997;	♦ Learners should not be treated as passive receivers of knowledge. They bring to the learning situations their own beliefs, interests, knowledge and preferred ways of learning. These must be taken into consideration when and selecting materials and designing tasks. ♦ Teachers should provide learners with a purpose with clear intentions for them to participate in learning activities or tasks.	♦ Learners are active participants in classroom activities. ♦ They have clear purposes or intentions for the tasks or activities they do in the classroom. ♦ Learners' beliefs, knowledge, interests are valued and built into the lesson contents and methodology.

	.Nature of learning - cognitive	♦ Learning is most effective when it is intentional and when what is being learned is relevant and meaningful to the learner with the learner actively engaged in creating his or her own knowledge and understanding by connecting what is being learned with prior knowledge and experience (Lambert and McCombs, 1997:10).	APA, 1997; Lambert and McCombs, 1997.	♦ Learning should be an intentional processes during which learners construct meaning from information, experiences, and their own thoughts and beliefs so that New knowledge becomes integrated with their prior knowledge and be used most effectively in new tasks, and transfer readily to new situations.	♦ Teachers elicit and builds on learners' existing knowledge, experience, competence and interests ♦ Teaching begins with everyday/ previous knowledge and end in more systematised knowledge showing that learning is a constructive process and what is being learned is relevant and meaningful to the learners. ♦ Ts pursue learners' interests and carefully scaffold new ideas and concepts and develop new knowledge in learners (Vygotsky, 1978).
	.Nature of learning – cognitive (continued)	♦ Knowledge widens and deepens as students continue to build links between new information and experiences and their existing knowledge base. How these links are made may vary in different subject areas, and among students with varying talents, interests, and abilities. ♦ Learners' language skills develop through their active use and reflection on the language.	Lambert and McCombs, 1997	♦ Teachers should assist learners in acquiring and integrating knowledge by using a number of strategies, such as concept mapping and thematic organisation or categorizing. ♦ Appropriate tasks need to be developed for different subject areas. They should also accommodate to students' different talents and abilities.	1) Tasks are meaningful and relevant with opportunities for learners to learn by doing, by engaging in meaningful tasks with acting, guessing, probing, investigation and communication. 2) There are opportunities for learners to ask questions, use imaginations, demonstrate understanding, express personal ideas and feelings, think and solve problems, and discover things for themselves.

	Nature of learning - megacognitive	♦ Successful learners set reasonable learning goals, select appropriate learning strategies, and monitor their progress toward these goals. ♦ Successful learners understand and use a variety of strategies to help them reach learning and performance goals, and to apply their knowledge in novel situations. They also expand their repertoire of strategies by reflecting on the methods they use to see which work well for them, by receiving guided instruction and feedback, and by observing or interacting with appropriate models.	APA, 1997; Alexander and Murphy 1997; Tudor, 1996.	♦ Instructional methods should be geared towards helping learners develop their strategies in setting up reasonable goals, selecting appropriate materials and strategies in order to enhance their learning and personal responsibility for learning. They should also learn to solve learning problems by reassessing the appropriateness and utility of the goals. ♦ Learners will need not only to learn about how language is structured and used but also about themselves as language learners and about why and how they learn so that they are gradually enabled to learn by themselves instead of just being told to do things that are always led by the teachers.	♦ Learners are involved in setting up goals, making plans, and selecting strategies for their own learning. 3) There are opportunities for learners to reflect on how they think and learn; on their learning goals, what they have done well or not so well and learn to monitor their progress towards their learning goals. ♦ There are opportunities for learners to self-assess their learning. ♦ There are opportunities for learners to make use of available resources. ♦ There is evidence showing that learners take certain degrees of responsibility for their own learning.

	Instruction and assessment	♦ Learning is influenced by instructional practices, cultural and technologies in which teachers play a major role with both the learner and the learning environment. ♦ Tasks of optimal novelty and difficulty, relevant to personal interests can stimulate learners' intrinsic motivation. Tasks that provide for personal choice and control also enhance personal involvement and performance (APA, 1997) ♦ Setting appropriately high and challenging standards and assessing the learner as well as learning progress -- including diagnostic, process, and outcome assessment -- are integral parts of the learning process. Self-assessments of learning progress can also improve students self appraisal skills and enhance motivation and self-directed learning	APA, 1997; Goldenberg, 1991 in Lambert and McCombs, 1997.	4) Teachers should motivate learners with interesting and relevant tasks based on considerations of their personal goals and prior knowledge and try to help them to achieve the desired outcomes. 5) Teachers should select appropriate materials and encourage learners to work towards appropriately high goals with an understanding of the learner's cognitive strengths and weaknesses, as well as current knowledge and skills. 6) A range of teaching strategies and instructional technologies should be employed to enhance learning effectiveness. 7) Different forms of assessment should be built into different stages of the learning process and used for gathering information about learners and their learning for improving teaching.	8) Tasks are comparable to real-world situations, interesting and personally relevant to the learners, appropriate in complexity and difficulty to the learners' abilities. 9) Teaching is outcome-based with the teacher clearly state goals/targets, summarise prior learning, present new information, checking for understanding, modeling successful performance, fostering independent learners and provide correctives and feedback on learner performance (Goldenberg, 1991, in Lambert and McCombs, 1997). ♦ Teachers use a range of teaching strategies with appropriate instructional technologies to stage learning and create meaningful context to motivate and enhance learning. ♦ Teachers manage classroom rules and make an effort for all learners to achieve learning targets. They act as facilitators, guides, helpers, resource providers and participants. ♦ Formative assessment and self-assessment are used for diagnostic purposes and for enhancing self-directed learning.

	Individual Differences	♦ Individual learners vary in their capabilities and talents. They have also acquired their own preferences for how they like to learn and the pace at which they learn through learning and social acculturation. However, these preferences are not always useful in helping learners reach their learning goals (APA,1997). ♦ Individual development varies across intellectual, social, emotional, and physical domains, achievement in different instructional domains may also vary.	Lambert and McCombs, 1997	♦ Teachers should be aware of and respect the uniqueness of each learner with an understanding of their needs, experiences, capabilities and perspectives. ♦ Awareness and understanding of developmental differences among children can facilitate the creation of optimal learning tasks and learning contexts. ♦ Teachers need to help learners examine their learning preferences and expand or modify them, if necessary. ♦ Individuals learn best when material is appropriate to their developmental level and is presented in an enjoyable and interesting way.	♦ Every learner, no matter fast or slow is respected and valued. ♦ Teachers understand the differences of learners and try to make learning contents relevant to their individual needs, knowledge, and personality. ♦ Teachers treat learners as co-creators in the teaching and learning process, as individuals with ideas and issues that deserve attention and consideration. ♦ Teachers provide instructions and guidance to help learners to expand and modify their preferences in learning and in using strategies.

	Social and Affective	♦ Learners' beliefs about themselves as learners and expectations for success can have a strong influence on motivation and the effort they put into learning. Their beliefs about themselves also influence the quality of thinking and information processing. Successful learning requires the investment of considerable learner energy and strategic effort, along with persistence over time (APA, 1997). ♦ Motivation and achievement can be enhanced when learners feel that their views and experiences are valued, respected, and accommodated in the learning tasks. Also, Learning can be enhanced when the learner has an opportunity to interact and to collaborate with others on learning tasks. ♦ Mild anxiety can enhance learning and performance while negative feelings generally damage motivation; interfere with learning and often lead to low performance.	Nunan, 1988, 1989; Nunan and Lamb, 1996; Tudor, 1993; Lambert and McCombs, 1997.	**10)** Teachers should help learners to build up a positive image of themselves as learners, help them gain self-confidence and sense of success in learning. 11) Teachers need to be concerned with facilitating motivation by using strategies that enhance learner effort and commitment to learning in order to help learners to achieve high standards of comprehension and understanding. 12) Teachers should use effective strategies with purposeful learning activities, guided by practices that enhance positive emotions and intrinsic motivation to learn. 13) Teachers should create tasks which are interesting and personally relevant with learning contexts that facilitate collaboration and interactions as well as challenging enough without giving excess anxieties on the part of the learners.	14) Opportunities for pair/group work. 15) Opportunities for interesting and meaningful interactive activities, such as role-plays or other games. 16) Teachers view learners positively, showing respect for and appreciation of learners' beliefs, individual ideas, ways of thinking and efforts they make into learning. 17) Learners learn with high motivation and interests. 18) Learners are active in cooperating in group work and in participating without fear of making mistakes. 19) Teachers share and discuss feelings with learners. ♦ Teachers show understanding of learners' learning difficulties. There is no excessive anxiety created in the classroom, such as ridicule or stigmatizing labels. ♦ Tasks are both challenging and achievable for the learners.

	Whole-person development	♦ Education should meet learners' cognitive and affective needs, both academic and nonacademic. ♦ '..the focus of education needs to be on clear expectations and high standards for each student while also respecting each student's diversity and unique talents (Lambert and McCombs, 1997:2)	Lambert and McCombs, 1997	♦ Education should not only focus on the intellectual development of children. It should promote all-round development of each child. ♦ Learners are no longer just language learners, they are viewed as complex human beings. Teaching exploits learners' affective and intellectual resources as fully as possible.	♦ Teachers set high attainment targets and promote the highest levels of motivation and highest standards of achievement for all learners. ♦ There is care shown on learners' moral, affective as well as intellectual gains.
	Learning Environment	♦ The classroom environment, particularly the degree to which it is nurturing or not, can have significant impacts on student learning.	APA, 1997; Tudor, 1996; Lambert and McCombs, 1997.	♦ Teachers should create a relaxed, democratic, supportive and encouraging environment for learning. ♦ Learning occurs best in an environment that contains positive interpersonal relationships and interactions, comfort and order, all in which the learner feels appreciated, acknowledged, respected and validated (Lambert and McCombs, 1997:10).	♦ Classroom atmosphere is relaxed with an equal relationship between the teacher and the learners who show mutual respect. ♦ Learners are not afraid of asking questions if they don't understand and they are not afraid of making mistakes. ♦ Learners feel appreciated and respected. They are eager to express their own opinions.

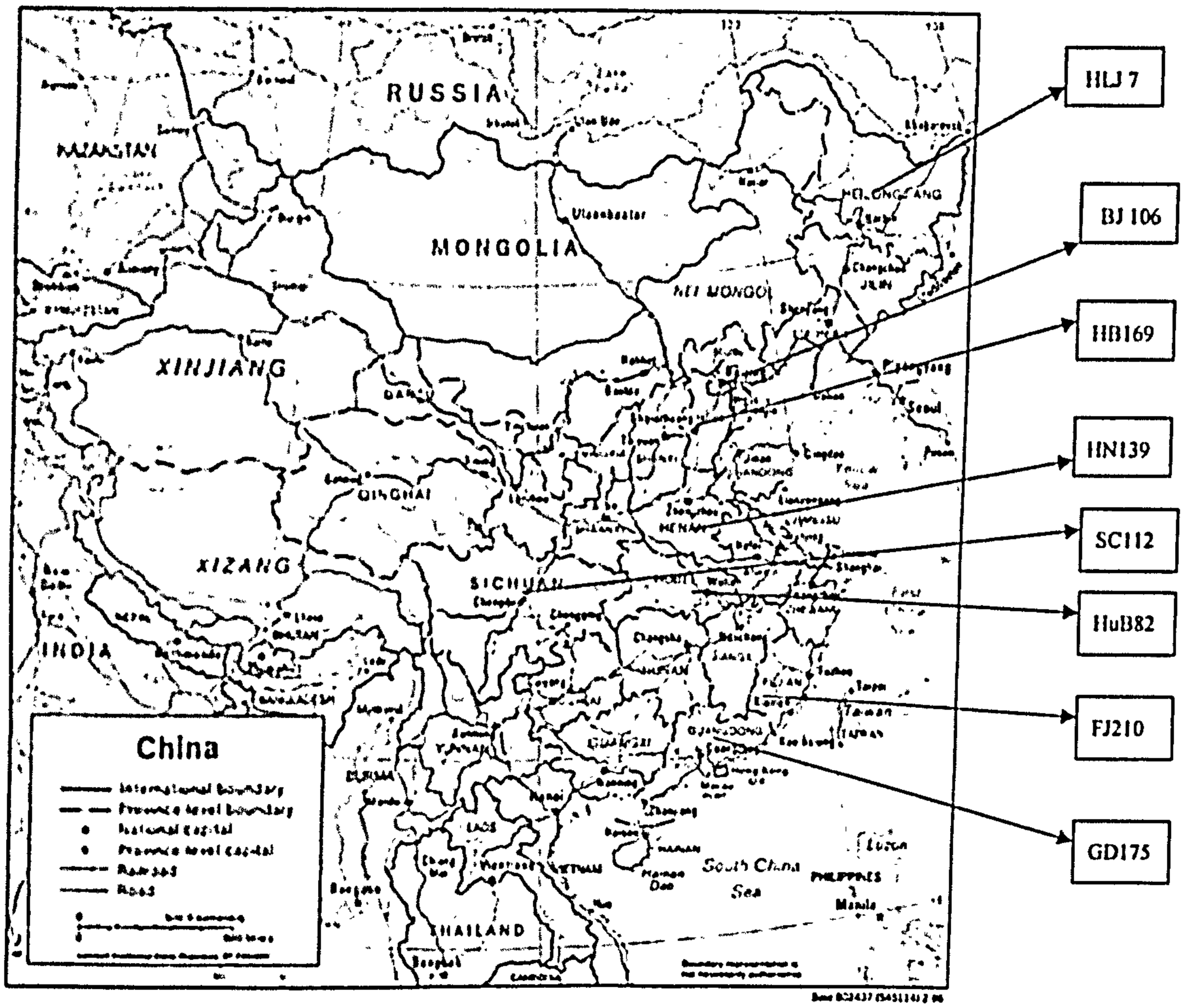
Appendix 6 Questionnaire Data Collection Record for the Main Study

Time	Place	Number collected	Return rate	Administrator	Valid	Accumu-lated Number
29/04/2004	Beijing	107/150	71%	Wang Qiang, Ma Xin, Chen Zehang	106	106
10/05/2004	Shunde, Guangdong Province	179/200	89.5%	Zhao Chunsheng Fu Qiang	175	281
18/05/2004	Enshi, Hubei Province	88/100	88%	Zhao Chunsheng	82	363
30/06/2004	Nengde, Fujian Province	157/200	78.5%	Zhao Chunsheng Fu Qiang Xia Ming	155	518
09/07/2004 10/07/2004 08/01/2005	Zhengzhou & Lingbao, Henan Province	124/150 28/50	82.7% 56%	Zhao Chunsheng Xia Ming Zhao Chunsheng	116 23	657
12/07/2004	Shishi, Fujian Province	56/80	70%	Zhao Chunsheng Xia Ming	55	712
18/07/2004	Tangshan, Hebei Province	118/150	79.3%	Zhao Chunsheng	118	830
18/08/2004	Sanhe, Handan, Hebei Province	56/80	63.8%	Liu Ying	51	881
18/08/2004	Harbin, Suihua, Qiqihar, Heilongjiang Province	7/7	100%	Liu Ying	7	888
07/12/2004	Chengdu, Sichuan Province	120/200	60%	Fan Bo	112	1000

Notes: 1000 RMB was used to buy small gifts such as pens and note pads for those teachers who completed and returned the questionnaire to show appreciation and also to increase return rate and quality of the answers.

Appendix 6 continued

Locations where questionnaire data was collected



Appendix 7 Questionnaire to TEACHERS (The Chinese version)

小学英语教师调查问卷

尊敬的各位老师：你们好！

这是一份关于小学英语教学的调查问卷，旨在了解小学英语教师的教学信念与课堂教学的关系，您在此所提供的信息将对这项研究具有重大意义。问卷的答题没有正误之分，最重要的是能够准确地反映您对小学英语教学的真实认识和您的课堂教学的实际情况。如果您对此项研究有兴趣，请将您的电子邮件地址留下，数据的初步分析结果会通过邮件寄发给您，供您教学和研究参考。

您的电子邮件地址：_____（请书写工整，以免无法发送）

此问卷共包括四个部分。第一部分是关于您个人的背景信息，此信息仅用于研究，不会作他用；第二部分主要了解您本人对小学英语教学的看法和所持有的信念；第三部分主要了解您的课堂教学实际行为。第四部分设计了两个开放式的题目，请您作比较自由的简要回答。每一部分的题目都有答题的具体要求，请仔细阅读答题要求，并保证每道题目都作了回答。衷心感谢您抽出宝贵时间参与问卷调查，并感谢您对小学英语教学研究的大力支持。

第一部分 个人背景信息

请选择适合自己个人情况的选项，并在所选项目前划勾√或根据要求填写信息。

1. 您的性别：　□ 男　□ 女

2. 您的年龄　□ 50 岁以上 □ 40-49 岁 □ 30-39 岁 □ 20-29 岁 □19 岁以下

3. 您的小学英语教学年限

□ 20 年以上 □ 10-19 年 □ 6-9 年 □ 3-5 年 □ 1-2 年 □ 1 年以下

4. 您目前所使用的主要教材是：名称_____ 出版社 _____

5. 您所使用的教材在多大程度上反应了新课程以学生为主体的课程理念？

□ 很大程度 □ 一定程度 □ 很小程度 □ 基本没有反应

6. 您认为与教材所配套的《教师用书》对你的备课和教学

□很有用 □比较有用 □不太有用 □没有用 □我没有《教师用书》

7. 您所任课的年级为：

□ 一年级 □ 二年级 □ 三年级 □ 四年级 □五年级 □ 六年级

8. 您所教的班级数_____ 学生总数_____ 平均班额 _____ 您每周课时数_____

9. 您目前的学历情况

□ 英语专业本科 □ 非英语专业本科 □ 英语大专 □ 非英语专业大专

□ 高中毕业 □ 其他_____ □ 在职攻读 _____学力/位

10. 近两年您是否参加过教师在职培训？ □ 是 □否

11. 您所参加的培训包括那些内容：（请根据实际情况选择，可选多项）

□ 关于新课程标准和要求的培训 □ 英语教学方法讲座

□ 关于新教材的培训 □ 课堂教学观摩研讨

□ 参加研讨班或研讨会 □ 其他（请说明）_____

12. 您目前任教学校的所在地：_____省 _____市 _____区/县

第二部分 关于课程理念

13. 以下问题旨在了解你对小学教育和英语课程的认识和理念，问题的设计采用按程度选项的方式，分为 4-0 五档，4 为完全同意，3 为同意，2 为不太同意，1 为不同意，0 为不相关或无选择。请在与你个人信念最接近的程度上划圈 O。

你同意吗？	完全同意 4	同意 3	不太同意 2	不同意 1	无选择 0
1) 小学英语的最主要目的是教会学生语言基础知识和技能。	4	3	2	1	0
2) 将新知识建立在学生已有知识的基础上有利学生建构新知识。	4	3	2	1	0
3) 学习语言就是要学好语法和词汇知识。	4	3	2	1	0
4) 学习英语的最佳方式是重复、模仿和记忆。	4	3	2	1	0
5) 宽松、合谐、民主的课堂环境有利于学生学习和使用英语。	4	3	2	1	0
6) 小学生个体之间没有太大差别，学习方式也都差不多。	4	3	2	1	0
7) 快乐的活动和体验式参与是小学生学习语言的最佳途径。	4	3	2	1	0
8) 小学生有能力参与制定个人学习的目标和计划。	4	3	2	1	0
9) 给予小学生选择学习方式的机会非常重要。	4	3	2	1	0
10) 小学生参与小组和两人活动对语言发展很有帮助。	4	3	2	1	0
11) 教师应创造机会鼓励小学生用英语表达自己的观点和感受。	4	3	2	1	0
12) 小学生年龄太小不适合参与自我评价。	4	3	2	1	0
13) 为小学生讲解英语语法知识很重要。	4	3	2	1	0
14) 背诵、重复和抄写是帮助小学生记忆词汇的最佳办法。	4	3	2	1	0
15) 良好的课堂纪律是取得好的教学效果必要保证。	4	3	2	1	0
16) 学习兴趣和自信心比记忆和背诵英文单词、句型更重要。	4	3	2	1	0
17) 考试是评价学生学习效果的最佳方式。	4	3	2	1	0
18) 我认为公布考试成绩有利于促进学生找差距，加倍努力。	4	3	2	1	0
19) 每个学生有不同的特点，教师应平等对待每个学生。	4	3	2	1	0
20) 教师应关注学生的个体差异，设法满足不同学生的学习需求。	4	3	2	1	0

14. 你认为你所教的小学生在他们毕业之后应该达到以下的那些目标，请从下列选项中选出你认为最重要的五个目标，并按其重要性进行排序。请在所选项目上划圈。

经过小学阶段的英语学习，小学生在毕业时应该能够：

a. 升中学后喜欢继续学习英语；
b. 发展对英语学习的积极态度；
c. 用简单的英语与他人进行交流；
d. 记忆了很多的课本中的英语词汇；
e. 准时并工整地完成作业；
f. 在考试中取得好成绩；
g. 认识国际音标并能通过国际音标认读新的英语词汇；
h. 掌握一些基本的语法规则并能正确地完成语法的练习；
i. 具有初步的自我评价的能力；
j. 用简单的工具书阅读其他相当水平的读物；
k. 对自己的学习做出初步计划，知道如何预习和复习；
l. 与其他同学合作学习，尊重他人的观点；
m. 背诵教材中的大部分对话和课文；
n. 上课注意听讲，认真做好笔记；
o. 积极参与各种课堂全班教学活动和小组、两人活动；
p. 与同学一起有自信心地表演歌曲、歌谣和角色扮演；
q. 遵守课堂纪律；
r. 积极思考；

请将所选项目的字母按重要性顺序填入下面的空格中

最重要 1 | | |
2 | | |
3 | | |
4 | | |
最不重要 5 | | |

15. 你认为小学英语教师应该扮演什么角色？你认为自己扮演的好的有哪些角色？请你根据自己的判断和实际情况对下列两个栏目的角色作出选择。在所选项目中打勾。

序号	不同角色	教师应扮演的角色	你扮演比较好的角色
1	知识的传授者		
2	军队指挥员		
3	父母		
4	引路人		
5	园丁		
6	演员		
7	组织者		
8	歌唱家		
9	榜样		
10	演示者		
11	管理者		
12	评价者		
13	纪律监控员		
14	帮助/咨询者		
15	资源提供者		
16	学习伙伴		
17	参与者		

16. 你如何描述你心目中的好学生？请从下列选项中选出好学生的五个重要特征，也可以在后面补充自己的观点。（请选出五项）

□ 一切按老师的要求做。
□ 按时完成作业。
□ 大声回答问题，大声重复。
□ 每次考试和测验都取得好成绩。
□ 课堂活动和小组活动积极参与。
□ 积极回答老师的问题。
□ 善于提问。
□ 对学习新事物有兴趣。
□ 能提出有趣的问题。
□ 善于思考。
□ 想像力丰富。
□ 遵守纪律
□ 能自己计划和安排时间
□ 知道如何独立学习。
□ 有特长
□ 其它（请补充）_____

17. 你如何理解‘学习’二字的意义？请从下列选项中选择最多三个与你的理解最接近的表述。（请选出三项）

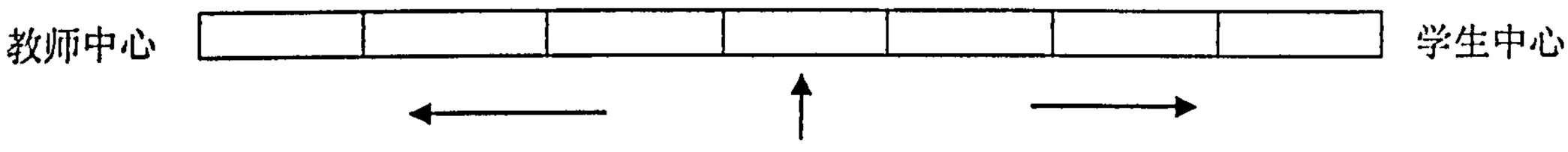
□ 学习就是接受知识。
□ 学习就是记忆很多知识，如词汇和语法知识。
□ 学习就是成为有知识的人。
□ 学习是指每个学生发展基于个人经验的理解能力和构建新知识。
□ 学习就是经过个人努力发现真理或事实。
□ 学习就是上学。
□ 学习就是学习学校所提供的教材。
□ 学习就是在考试中取得好成绩。
□ 学习就是为今后发展获得有效的学习方法和策略。
□ 学习就是要发展对自己、对人民、对文化和对社会的积极态度。
□其它（请补充）_____

18. 你对在小学外语教学中推进以学生为主体的教学思想的第一反应是（可选择一至两项）

□ 很认同 □有热情 □有信心 □有保留 □有怀疑 □ 我反对

第三部分 了解你的教学行为

19.你如何描述你的课堂教学，更趋向于学生中心还是教师中心？请在下面的连续体中划出最能反映你的教学倾向的位置。请在适当的空格中画叉 (X)。（请在所选择格子中画一个叉）.



20. 以下表述是否真实反映了你的实际教学情况？采用 4-0 的程度方式选择最恰当的答案。4 表示完全准确, 3 表示准确，2 表示不太准确, 1 不准确； 0 表示不相关。

你是这样教学的吗？	完全准确 4	准确 3	不太准确 2	不准确 1	不相关 0
1) 我经常让学生跟老师/录音机模仿和重复所学单词和对话。	4	3	2	1	0
2) 我经常组织学生开展小组或两人活动。	4	3	2	1	0
3) 我经常在学习新的语法结构时给学生作比较详 细的讲解。	4	3	2	1	0
4) 我课堂教学活动丰富，适合小学生的心理、认知水平。	4	3	2	1	0
5) 我的课堂教学气氛宽松、民主和谐，学生参与踊跃。	4	3	2	1	0
6) 我经常指导学生自己制定学习小计划。	4	3	2	1	0
7) 我会给学生自己选择不同学习方式和不同形式作业的机会。	4	3	2	1	0
8) 我经常给学生创造自主提问的机会，激发思考和想像。	4	3	2	1	0
9) 我的教学目标是使学生掌握语言基础知识和基本技能。	4	3	2	1	0
10) 我经常组织学生参与自我评价活动。	4	3	2	1	0
11) 课堂基本以我讲解词汇和句型为主，学生做适当语言练习。	4	3	2	1	0
12) 我特别注意激发学生的学习兴趣，保护他们的自尊心。	4	3	2	1	0
13) 我经常采取考试的方式检查和评价学生的学习。	4	3	2	1	0
14) 课堂上学生大量参与语言实践活动，我提供指导和帮助。	4	3	2	1	0
15) 我在考试后通常公布学生的成绩。	4	3	2	1	0
16) 在教学中我重视课堂纪律，强调良好的课堂秩序..。	4	3	2	1	0
17) 我从不嫌弃学习有困难的学生。	4	3	2	1	0
18) 我总是在教新内容时设法从学生已有的知识入手。	4	3	2	1	0
19) 我创造机会并鼓励学生表达自己的观点、感受和见解。	4	3	2	1	0
20) 我注意根据学生的个体差异变换教学方式来满足不同学生的需求。	4	3	2	1	0

21. 坦率讲，我认为我自己的课堂教学倾向于 （请选一项）

□ 教师中心　　□ 学生中心　　□ 教师主导下的学生中心

请作简要解释 _____

22. 我对自己和自己的教学环境的评价　(每题选一项)：

1) 我的语言能力　　□ 强　□ 较强　□ 一般　□ 较弱　□ 弱

2) 我对教师职业的热爱程度 □ 强　□ 较强　□ 一般　□ 较弱　□ 弱

3) 我适应新课程的能力　□ 有能力 □ 有自信　□有畏难情绪 □有压力 □ 不适应

4) 我所在的教学环境（如领导、同事、家长、管理体制等）对实施以学生为主体的新课程

□ 很有利　□比较有利　□不太有利　　□不利　　□很不利

请作简要说明_____

第四部分 简答题

23. 以学生为主体/中心的课堂具有什么突出特点？请简要列举几项主要特征。

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

24. 你认为*以学生为中心*和*以学生为主体*在概念上有区别吗？ □ 有　□ 没有

如果你认为‘有’，请作简要解释;如果你认为没有区别，请继续回答 25 题。

- 以学生为中心的意思是：_____
- 以学生为主体的意思是：_____

25. 你认为小学英语教学是否应该推进以学生为主体的教学思想？为什么？在你自己的课堂教学中推进以学生为主体的教学方式有什么主要的困难？请简要说明。

再次感谢您的合作！

Appendix 8 Questionnaire to TEACHERS (The English version)

Dear colleagues, I am doing research on Chinese teachers' beliefs about primary school English teaching. Your response to this questionnaire is of great importance to my study. There are no right or wrong answers involved in the questionnaire. The most important thing is that it reflects your own beliefs and real practice in the classroom. Your cooperation is highly appreciated. If you are interested in the research result I will make sure that I send you the result of this study after the preliminary analysis. All you need to do is to write your e-mail address in the space provided below.

Your e-mail address: _____

The questionnaire is divided into four sections. The first section is about your personal information as a primary school English teacher. This information is needed only for research purposes. It will not be used for any other purposes or disclosed to any other person. The second section concerns the general beliefs you have towards primary school English teaching. The third section asks you to report what your real classroom teaching is like. The last section contains two open questions to give you more space to further express your ideas or understandings. For each section of the questions, instructions are given in terms of how you should answer them. Read the instructions carefully and make sure that every question is answered. Thank you very much for your participation in the questionnaire survey and your support for the research on primary school English teaching.

Section I Personal Information

Please tick an appropriate answer or write out your answer in words as required.

1. Sex: □ **Male** □**Female**

2. Age: □ 50 and above □40-49 □30-39 □20-29 □below 19

3. Years of teaching experience in the primary school

□20 and above □10-19 years □5-9 years □3-4 years □1-2 years

4. The textbook you are using at present

TITLE_____ PUBLISHER_____

5. How much do you think the textbook you use now reflect LAMP/LC approach?

□ A great deal □ a lot □ to some extent □ not very much □ not at all

6. How do you find about the Teacher's Book?

□ very useful □useful □ not very useful □ useless □ I don't have a teacher's book

7. Which grade of children are you teaching at the moment?

□Grade 1 □ grade 2 □Grade 3 □Grade 4 □Grade 5 □Grade 6

8. How many classes are you teaching at present during each week and what is the proximate number of students and the number of hours that you teach in a week? (Write in the line below.)

Total number of classes you teach_____

Total number of pupils _____

Number of hours you teach per week _____

Average number of pupils in one class _____

9. What kind of degree or the type of teaching certificate do you have at present?

☐ BA in English ☐ BA in other subjects (not English)

☐ Certificate in English ☐ Certificate in other subjects (not English)

☐ Senior high school graduate ☐ Other _____

☐ Studying for a degree now (please specify_____)

10. Have you attended any in-service training session for the last two years?

☐ Yes ☐ No

11. What kind of training course/topics have you attended? (Please tick the appropriate box(es)).

☐ How to use the new textbook

☐ Study of the new syllabus

☐ Observing other teachers' teaching

☐ Listen to lectures on how to teach.

☐ Attending conferences

☐ Other (Please specify) _____

12. What is the location of your school? (Please write in the space provided.)

_____Province, _____city, _____district

Section II

Your general beliefs about English language teaching in the primary school

13. The following set of questions asks you about your beliefs regarding primary English teaching. In the questions below, a scale of 0-4 is given to reflect the degree of your agreement to each statement. 4 stands for strongly agree (SA), 3 stands for agree (A), 2 not quite agree (NQA) and 1 disagree (NA). 0 stands for not relevant (NR) or no opinion. Please read the statements carefully and circle the number that is closest to what you believe in.

	SA A NQA NA NR 4 3 2 1 0
1) The most important task for primary school English is to teach children basic language knowledge and skills.	4 3 2 1 0
2) Teaching new knowledge based on what learners already know is helpful for constructing new knowledge.	4 3 2 1 0
3) To learn a language is to learn its grammar rules and vocabulary.	4 3 2 1 0
4) Children learn language best though repetitions, imitations, and memorisation.	4 3 2 1 0
5) Relaxed and harmonious atmosphere facilitate learning.	4 3 2 1 0
6) Children are more or less the same. They learn in similar ways.	4 3 2 1 0
7) Children learn best when participating in enjoyable activities through their own experience.	4 3 2 1 0
8) Children are able to be involved in setting up goals and objectives for their own learning.	4 3 2 1 0
9) It is important that children be given choices in learning tasks and ways of learning.	4 3 2 1 0
10) It is helpful for children's language development by letting them work in groups and pairs	4 3 2 1 0

11) Children should be encouraged as much as possible to express their own ideas and feelings.	**4 3 2 1 0**
12) Children are too young to be involved in self-assessment.	**4 3 2 1 0**
13) It is very important for teachers to explain grammar rules to children.	**4 3 2 1 0**
14) The best way to help children remember new vocabulary is to ask them to recite, repeat and copy the words.	**4 3 2 1 0**
15) For effective teaching, discipline is important.	**4 3 2 1 0**
16) Interest and self-confidence are more important than being able to memorise words and structures.	**4 3 2 1 0**
17) Exams/tests are the best ways to assess children's learning.	**4 3 2 1 0**
18) I believe publicizing test results are good for children to find their weaknesses and can make them work harder.	**4 3 2 1 0**
19) Children all have different characteristics and teachers should treat them equally.	**4 3 2 1 0**
20) Teachers should try as much as possible to understand every child's needs, interests and capability and plan their teaching based on such an understanding.	**4 3 2 1 0**

14.What do you expect children to achieve after learning English in the primary school? Choose from the list below no more than five that you think most important as your goals of English language teaching. Write them in the order of importance in the space provided below from the most important to the least important

After children learning English in the primary school, they should be able to:

a. like to continue learning in the secondary school. *Most important* 1
b. develop a positive attitude towards English and English language learning.
c. communicate with others in simple English. *2*
d. memorise a lot of English words learned from the textbooks. 3
e. complete homework neatly and on time.
f. get good test results. *4*
g. recognise IPA and using them to pronounce other new words. *Least important* *5*
h. master some basic grammar rules of English and do grammatical exercises correctly.
i. have initial ability to self-assess their own learning.
j. use simple dictionary to help them with reading and new words.
k. do simple planning with their own learning, knowing how to preview and review lessons.
l. learn to work with other pupils and respect other pupils' ideas.
m. memorise most of the dialogues they learned in the textbooks
n. listen to the teacher attentively in class and take notes carefully.
o. participate actively in whole class activities and group/pair activities.
p. can perform with other pupils songs, rhymes, and role plays confidently.
q. be always disciplined in class.
r. think actively

15. What kind of role(s) do you believe an English teacher in the primary school should play? What kind of role(s) do you think you have played well? Please tick the right box (es).

		Roles you think you should play	Roles you think you have played well
1	Knowledge provider		
2	Army commander		
3	Parent		
4	Guide		
5	Gardener		
6	Actor		
7	Organiser		
8	Singer		
9	Role model		
10	Demonstrator		
11	Manager		
12	Assessor		
13	Discipline controller		
14	Consultant/helper		
15	Resource provider		
16	Companion		
17	Participant		
18	If more (specify here)		

16. How do you describe a good learner in your class? Choose FIVE most important features.

☐ Always do what the teacher asks him/her to do.
☐ Finish homework on time.
☐ Speak and repeat loudly in class.
☐ Always do well in all quizzes and tests.
☐ Active in group work and class activities
☐ Active in answering the teacher's questions
☐ Have good pronunciation and intonation
☐ Interested in learning new things
☐ Ask interesting questions
☐ Good at thinking
☐ Full of imagination
☐ Very disciplined
☐ Plan one's own time well
☐ Know how to learn by oneself
☐ Have special skills/talent
☐ Other (please specify):_____

17. How do you understand the meaning of learning? Choose your answer from the list below THREE statements that are the closest to your understanding.

- ☐ Learning means to receive knowledge.
- ☐ Learning means to remember a lot of knowledge, such as vocabulary and grammar rules.
- ☐ Learning means to become knowledgeable.
- ☐ Learning means to develop understanding and construct new knowledge based on one's own experiences.
- ☐ Learning means to find out by oneself the truth.
- ☐ Learning means going to school.
- ☐ Learning means to study textbooks provided by schools.
- ☐ Learning means to get good results in exams.
- ☐ Learning means to acquire effective learning strategies for the future.
- ☐ Learning means to develop positive attitudes towards oneself, people, cultural, and society.
- ☐ Other (please specify)_____

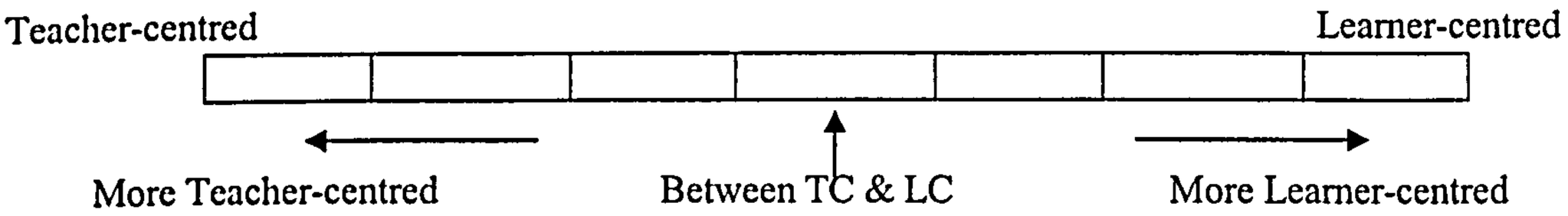
18. What is your immediate reaction to the concept of LAMP/LC? (You may choose one or two from the answers given below)

☐ supportive ☐ enthusiastic ☐ convinced ☐reserved ☐ skeptical ☐ against

☐ Other (Please specify) _____

Section III Your own teaching behaviours

19. How would you describe your own classroom teaching? Is it more learner-centred or more teacher-centred? Please put a cross (X) in an appropriate box to indicate the place which best represent your way of teaching.



20. Which of the following statements truly reflect your teaching situation? Use the scale to select your answer. 4 stands for absolutely true (AT), 3 for true (T), 2 for not really true (NRT), 1 for not true (NT) and 0 stands for not relevant or no opinion (NR).

	AT	T	NRT	NT	NR
	4	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
1) I ask children to do a lot of repetitions and drilling after me or the tape to practice new words and dialogues.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
2) I often ask children to do pair/group work.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
3) I explain grammar in detail when we learn new structures.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
4) I use a variety of activities that are suitable for children's level of understanding and interests.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
5) My classroom atmosphere is relaxed and democratic in which children feel happy and secure to participate.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
6) I often guide my learners to make their own learning plans.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
7) I sometimes give children choices in choosing their own ways of learning.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
8) I often create opportunities for children to ask questions and invite them to think and imagine.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
9) My teaching goal is to make learners learn the basic language knowledge and skills.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
10) I often invite learners to do self-assessment about their own learning.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
11) In class, I explain grammar and vocabulary most of the time then pupils do some focused practice.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
12) I am very keen in arousing the learners' interest in learning and try to protect their self-esteem.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
13) I often assess learners' learning by giving them tests.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
14) In class, my pupils do activities most of the time, I provide help and support to their learning.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
15) I often publicise learners' test results.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
16) I stress on good discipline and try to keep good order during class time.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
17) I never look down upon slow learners.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
18) Before I teach a new lesson, I try to start with what children have already known about the topic.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
19) I create opportunities for learners to express their own ideas and feelings.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
20) I am aware of the individual differences among the learners and try to vary my teaching methods and tasks to meet their needs.	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**

21. To be honest, I think my classroom is more or less

A. teacher-centred B. learner-centered C. teacher-directed learner-centered

Please explain _____

22. Self-assess yourself and your teaching context:

1) My language competence: ☐ very good ☐ good ☐normal ☐quite weak ☐ weak

2) My love for teaching: ☐very much ☐ a lot ☐so-so ☐ not very much ☐ not at all

3) My capability to meet the challenges in the new curriculum

☐ very capable ☐ very confident ☐ feeling pressured

☐ feeling worried ☐ unable to cope

4) My teaching context (such as school leaders, colleagues, parents, requirements, etc.) for implementing the new the new curriculum

☐ very supportive ☐ supportive ☐ not very supportive ☐ not supportive

Please explain: _____

Section IV Open questions

23. What do you think are some of the most important features of a LAMP/LC classroom? Please try to make a list of the features according to your understanding.

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

24. Do you think there is a difference between the two terms: LC-(Learner-centredness） and LAMP (Learners-as-main-participants) ?

☐ Yes ☐No

If you think there is a difference, please explain what the differences are according to your understanding.

Learner-'zhongxin' _____

Learner -'zhuti' _____

25. Do you think it is important for teachers to implement a LAMP/LC in the primary school? Why and Why not? What are some of the major benefits and difficulties for implementing such an approach in your context?

Thank you very much indeed for your time and kind cooperation!

Appendix 9 Observation and Interview Data Collection Record

Date of Observation	School location	Teacher	Grade level of pupils	No. of Pupils in class	Forms of interviews	Notes
07-March-2005	Primary School attached to Beijing Petroleum University	T9	Grade 3	48	Self-reflection, group interview & head of school interview	Video & audio, notes, photos
07-March-2005	Same as above	T17	Grade 5	53	Same as above	Video & audio, notes, photos
10-March-2005	Fu'an Primary School attached to Fu'an Normal College	Ms. X	Grade 3 (B)'	44	Self-reflection & group discussions	Notes and photos;
10-March-2005	Fu'an Experimental Primary School	Ms. Y[2]	Grade 3 (B)	36	Same as above	Notes and photos
14-March-2005	Mianyang Foreign Languages School, Sichuan	T15	Grade 4	40	Self-reflection & group interview	Notes, photos, audio;
14-March-2005	Same as above	T13	Grade 3 (B)	44	Same as above	Notes, photos, audio;
16-March-2005	Chengdu Liangshuijing Primary School, Sichuan	T12	Grade 3	37	Same as above	Notes, photos, audio;
16-March-2005	Same as above	T3	Grade 1	22	Self-reflection, individual and group interview	Notes, photos, audio;
16-March-2005	Same as above	T6	Grade 2	51	Self-reflection & group interview	Notes, photos, audio;
16-March-2005	Same as above	. T14	Grade 4	48	Self-reflection and group interview	Notes, photos, audio;
18-March-2005	Chengdu Shuangnan Experimental School, Sichuan	Ms. Z[3] (new)	Grade 5	58	Self-reflection	Notes, photos, audio;

1. (B) stands for beginning level from Grade 3.
2. Lessons given by Ms.X and Ms.Y were not recorded due to technical difficulties;
3. Ms.Z's lesson was excluded from the study as it was found that she was a new graduate from the university with less than one year teaching experience in primary English..

18-March-2005	Chengdu Longjianglu Primary School – Branch, Sichuan	T7	Grade 2	50	Self-reflection & individual interview with the head teacher	Notes, photos, audio;
30-March-2005	Shenzhen Luoling Foreign Language Experimental Primary School	T16	Grade 4	53	Head teacher's remarks	Notes, photos, audio;
31-March-2005	Shenzhen Huaqiaocheng Primary School	T18	Grade 6	50	Self-reflection & public interview with the teacher followed by group interview	Notes, photos, audio;
01-April-2005	Zhongshan Yongkang Primary School	T4	Grade 1	40		Notes, Photos, audio;
01-April-2005	Same as above	T8	Grade 2	40		Notes, photos, audio;
04-April-2005	Tianjin Machangdao Primary School	T2	Grade 1	24	Self- reflection & public interview	Notes, photos, audio;
04-April-2005	Tianjin Primary School attached to Tianjing Normal University	T5	Grade 2	44	Self- reflection & public interview	Notes, photos, audio;
27-April-2005	Beijing No 3 Zhongguancun Primary School	T1	Grade 1	40	Individual interview	Notes, photos, audio;
28-April-2005	Beijing No.1 Experimental Primary School	T10	Grade 3	40	Paired interview	Notes, photos, audio;
28-April-2005	Same as above	T11	Grade 3	40	Paired interview	Notes, photos, audio.

Appendix 10 The prepared interview schedule (The English version)

The prepared interview schedule in English

1. Are you satisfied with your lesson today? Have you achieved what you expected? What were your expectations about this lesson?
2 How would you describe the lesson today as compared to other lessons you teach on a daily basis? (Quite a normal lesson or is it very different? If it is different from a normal lesson, in what sense is it different?)
3 Did your lesson follow what you had planned? Did you for some reason change your plan? If yes, at what stage(s) and for what reasons?
4 I noticed you did this/that..., why do you do this/that?
5 How would you describe your approach to teaching? (The interviewee may or may not mention LAMP. If she/he does, continue with the next question; if he/she doesn't, bring in the concept, i.e. As you know the new curriculum advocates the LAMP approach to teaching. Do you think your lesson/class has reflected such an approach?)
6 Can you describe in more detail that in what way do you think your lesson is learner-centred or not learner-centred?
7 What is your attitude towards such an approach? Has the approach affected your teaching behaviours in the classroom? If yes, in what ways? If not, why not?
8 As a teacher, what role(s) have you taken up in teaching? (For example, the role of a knowledge transmitter, an army commander, a parent, a gardener, a guide, an actor, an organiser, a singer, a role model, a demonstrator, a manager, an assessor, a discipline controller, a helper/consultant, a resource provider, a learning companion, a participant).
9 Is it easy to be learner-centred? Why? What are the most difficult things or your most concerns in implementing learner-centred teaching?
10 What about your teaching environment? How would you describe it? Do the administrators, parents and colleagues support you to take the LAMP approach? In what ways? How important the environment is for you to implement learner-centred teaching?

Appendix 11 The prepared interview schedule (The Chinese version)

Prepared interview schedule in Chinese

1. 你对自己的这节课满意吗？达到你的预想目标了吗？你的预想目标是什么？
2. 你的这节课与你平时的课相比属于正常的课吗？还是与平时有很大的不同？
3. 你的这节课是按照教学计划进行的吗？你在教学过程中对你的教案作调整了吗？什么时候？为什么？在教学实施中经常会调整自己的教案和教学方法吗？为什么？
4. 我记得你在课上。。。为什么你会那样处理？当时你是如何考虑的？
5. 你如何描述你的教学思想或方法？被访谈者可能会提到学生主体的思想，那么可以继续引导以下的问题，如果被访者没有提到学生主体的思想，点出来后继续下面的问题。
6. 我们都知道在新课程中我们提倡以学生为主体的教学思想，你认为你的课堂教学在多大程度上反映了这一思想？主要体现在哪些地方？哪些活动你认为是以学生为主体设计和实施的？为什么说这些活动是以学生为主体的？
7. 你对以学生为主体的教学的态度是什么？你认为你在努力适应新课程的理念吗？具体来讲，你是如何做的？
8. 作为教师，你认为哪些角色是教师应该担当的，哪些角色是你担当得比较好的？（知识传授者，军队指挥员，父母，引导者，园丁，表演者，组织者，歌唱家，榜样，演示者，管理者，评价者，纪律监控员，帮助者/咨询者，资源提供者，学习伙伴，参与者）
9. 实施以学生为主体的教学容易吗？为什么？你最关注的问题或者遇到的最大困难是什么？
10. 你对自己的工作环境满意吗？（社会、学校、同事和家长对实施主体教育支持等）。他们的态度和支持对你的教学有什么影响吗？如果有，主要体现在哪些方面？

Appendix 12 English and Non-English degrees held - different provinces compared

Education * Location (Province) Crosstabulation

			Location (Province)								Total
			Beijing	Hebei	Heilingjiang	Henan	Hubei	Fujian	Guangdong	Sichuan	
Education	English	Count	52	85	4	93	21	76	119	81	531
		% within Location (Province)	49.1%	50.3%	57.1%	66.9%	25.6%	36.4%	68.0%	72.3%	53.2%
		% of Total	5.2%	8.5%	.4%	9.3%	2.1%	7.6%	11.9%	8.1%	53.2%
	Non-Engish	Count	54	84	3	46	61	133	56	31	468
		% within Location (Province)	50.9%	49.7%	42.9%	33.1%	74.4%	63.6%	32.0%	27.7%	46.8%
		% of Total	5.4%	8.4%	.3%	4.6%	6.1%	13.3%	5.6%	3.1%	46.8%
Total		Count	106	169	7	139	82	209	175	112	999
		% within Location (Province)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	10.6%	16.9%	.7%	13.9%	8.2%	20.9%	17.5%	11.2%	100.0%

Appendix 13 Open Questions Data-coding Sheets 1 - 5

Data-coding sheet 1 **Number of participants giving reasons for choosing TDLC, TC and LC respectively**

	Questionnaire coded numbers	Total
Explanations given for taking the Teacher-directed learner-centred approach	1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 27, 30, 31, 32, 35, 36, 43, 44, 45, 48, 53, 55, 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 65, 71, 73, 77, 78, 79, 80, 82, 86, 87, 91, 92, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 100, 107, 108, 113, 118, 124, 126, 130, 133, 135, 139, 141, 142, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 154, 156, 158, 159, 160, 165, 166, 167, 168, 170, 171, 178, 180, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 197, 199, 202, 204, 205, 206, 207, 209, 210, 215, 216, 220, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 235, 239, 240, 244, 246, 250, 251, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 267, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 294, 295, 300, 301, 302, 305, 307, 308, 310, 311, 315, 316, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 326, 327, 330, 332, 334, 335, 338, 342, 344, 345, 348, 349, 351, 357, 358, 359, 360, 363, 367, 368, 369, 372, 374, 375, 376, 379, 381, 384, 386, 387, 389, 390, 393, 394, 397, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 405, 406, 407, 408, 410, 411, 412, 414, 416, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 429, 430, 431, 432, 435, 437, 439, 440, 444, 446, 450, 454, 456, 459, 460, 461, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 472, 475, 476, 477, 483, 484, 486, 489, 490, 494, 495, 499, 501, 505, 507, 508, 509, 514, 515, 516, 517, 521, 523, 524, 525, 527, 528, 532, 533, 536, 537, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 546, 549, 563, 565, 566, 568, 570, 573, 578, 580, 581, 582, 583, 585, 587, 588, 590, 591, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 601, 602, 606, 607, 608, 610, 611, 613, 615, 617, 619, 621, 623, 624, 629, 636, 641, 642, 645, 646, 647, 649, 652, 653, 654, 660, 661, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 669, 670, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 685, 687, 691, 692, 693, 696, 697, 699, 700, 701, 704, 707, 708, 711, 712, 715. 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 732, 733, 734, 735, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 743, 744, 745, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 755, 758, 759, 761, 762, 763, 767, 770, 772, 774, 775, 776, 777, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786	413
Explanations given for taking the TC approach	15, 29, 33, 90, 109, 116, 136, 140, 164, 339, 448, 478, 480, 530, 571, 586, 600, 637, 662, 757, 764.	21
Explanations given for taking the LC approach	24, 26, 28, 39, 89, 93, 138, 161, 191, 196, 296, 297, 298, 313, 319, 329, 331, 347, 355, 364, 398, 404, 427, 433, 441, 443, 449, 453, 457, 492, 493, 512, 518, 545, 548, 561, 562, 625, 650, 672, 694, 706, 713, 742, 753, 769.	46

Data-coding sheet 2 **Question 20 What does T-directed learner-centredness mean and why? (Total 413)**

Theme 1 Conceptual explanations (Total 71)a	**Theme 2 Reasons for taking TDLC Approach (Total 219) b**		**Theme 3 Practical classroom procedures/features k (Total 119)**	**Other (4) l**
1, 4, 10, 11, 35, 48, 62, 95, 97, 113, 118, 124, 126, 139, 156, 187, 227, 230, 258, 276, 287, 289, 300, 320, 335, 342, 345, 358, 359, 375, 386, 387, 399, 401, 419, 423, 425, 454, 516, 566, 573, 580, 585, 596, 606, 607, 608, 611, 613, 629, 649, 670, 675, 681, 693, 720, 725, 726, 727, 728, 739, 741, 759, 762, 777, 779, 780, 781, 784, 785, 786	**Teacher-direction is prerequisite for effective learning (73) b1**	7, 31, 45, 53, 91, 96, 142, 148, 149, 170, 185, 189, 216, 229, 239, 246, 251, 255, 256, 257, 260, 262, 264, 272, 291, 305, 307, 311, 322, 326, 327, 332, 334, 338, 348, 357, 367, 368, 379, 381, 402, 412, 424, 456, 477, 501, 508, 514, 536, 546, 578, 581, 583, 598, 619, 620, 641, 652, 654, 660, 674, 687, 733, 734, 735, 737, 738, 747, 748, 761, 770, 772, 783	6, 12, 17, 21, 23, 25, 32, 36, 55, 57, 61, 71, 73, 78, 86, 87, 92, 100, 108, 130, 133, 144, 158, 159, 160, 167, 178, 180, 186, 206, 210, 220, 228, 261, 267, 282, 283, 288, 295, 301, 308, 310, 315, 321, 323, 344, 349, 372, 374, 390, 397, 400, 406, 416, 418, 421, 432, 437, 444, 446, 460, 466, 469, 472, 475, 486, 489, 490, 495, 499, 505, 509, 515, 521, 523, 528, 532, 537, 541, 543, 544, 549, 563, 582, 587, 590, 591, 593, 594, 597, 601, 621, 623, 624, 636, 653, 663, 669, 676, 680, 682, 685, 692, 697, 699, 701, 704, 718, 721, 722, 723, 729, 732, 740, 750, 751, 755, 774, 775	183, 232, 661, 696
	Teaching context determines the approach of teaching (111) b2	**Age (c):** 18, 30, 77, 82, 202, 204, 235, 240, 250, 263, 273, 389, 403, 405, 407, 410, 414, 420, 422, 430, 435, 440, 450, 459, 461, 464, 470, 494, 517, 524, 527, 568, 588, 646, 707, 711, 717, 745, 763 **Large classes and discipline problems (d):** 154, 184, 188, 205, 225, 279, 284, 285, 294, 384, 439, 483, 540, 610, 647, 712, 743, 744, 758 **Subject matter itself (e):** 22, 135, 209, 274, 275, 280, 281, 393, 465, 525, 664, 666, 678, 700, 782 **Teaching requirement (f):** 98, 107, 197, 363, 369, 602, 677, 716 **Rural schools (g):** 166, 168, 207, 244, 259, 302, 376, 542, 691, 730, 767 **Exam system (h):** 65, 145, 394, 476, 507, 533, 642 **Other (i):**,*94, 411, 484* (low quality of ss) *199, 749* (Pupils vary) *147, 171, 330, 565, 615, 617, 679* (Change takes time.)		
	TDLC is not ideal e but due to lack of experience and personal capacity (19) b3	3, 20, 43, 44, 59, 60, 79, 146, 165, 215, 226, 231, 351, 467, 468, 667, 708, 715, 719		
	Justification and philo-sophical beliefs (16) b4	27, 80, 141, 286, 290, 324, 337, 360, 408, 429, 431, 570, 595, 645, 665, 776		

Data-coding sheet 3 **Question 21 Assessment of school context for curriculum reform (497)**

Very supportive or supportive for reform (4 & 5) a			**Not very supportive (3) j**	**No support (2&1) k**	**Other l**
1.Strong support from school leaders, parents, and colleagues (135)a	2.Strong personal quality (37)b	**3. There is support but there is lack of resources, time, money, equipment, or capability (88)q**	**School location, lack of parent support; poor facilities; poor teacher quality; large classes; school leaners conservative in ideology (184)**	Lack of facilities and resources (34)	(19)
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 14, 17, 23, 33, 39, 43, 53, 57, 58, 61, 96, 108, 116, 118, 129, 130, 133, 147, 148, 163, 170, 187, 191, 199, 209, 210, 233, 240, 258, 259, 282, 287, 296, 298, 304, 310, 311, 315, 318, 319, 323, 329, 345, 360, 367, 374, 375, 389, 390, 400, 405, 424, 425, 446, 449, 450, 451, 461, 471, 477, 480, 484, 492, 493, 503, 510, 512, 514, 516, 520, 521, 524, 529, 535, 537, 543, 545, 546, 549, 574, 581, 582, 583, 585, 586, 589, 591, 594, 611, 612, 613, 617, 619, 620, 623, 624, 626, 633, 637, 647, 651, 652, 654, 664, 672, 676, 679, 680, 681, 682, 686, 687, 691, 704, 707, 716, 717, 721, 727, 754, 762, 777, 779, 781, 784, 785, 786	18, 32, 78, 79, 80, 122, 123, 149, 160, 206, 225, 274, 291, 308, 313, 324, 355, 359, 369, 395, 409, 427, 474, 497, 499, 571, 589, 598, 614, 615, 629, 660, 665, 666, 685, 693, 775	12, 15, 24, 44, 48, 55, 60, 70, 71, 89, 93, 137, 143, 161, 180, 183, 201, 216, 239, 261, 262, 263, 268, 269, 270, 281, 283, 297, 320, 322, 330, 331, 332, 334, 337, 339, 347, 352, 354, 363, 371, 388, 389, 393, 398, 399, 412, 417, 418, 429, 459, 466, 501, 512, 513, 523, 528, 530, 532, 541, 542, 562, 563, 570, 571, 574, 580, 584, 641, 642, 660, 674, 675, 676, 678, 683, 693, 720, 725, 733, 734, 742, 747, 748, 755, 764, 769, 782 **Lack of resources: c** (12, 15, 161, 262, 320, 322, 332, 334, 337, 371, 388, 389, 393, 412, 459, 512, 513, 523, 580, 742, 748) **Lack of personal capabilities d** (语言 239, 263, ,337, 347, 571, 418; 经验 693, 574; 能力 60, 330, 354, 363; 自信心 24, 55, 216, 747). **Lack of support from parents e** (89, 268, 269, 270, 331, 393, 398, 417, 528, 562, 563, 675, 676, 733, 734, 755, 769) **Constrained by testing system f** (137, 143, 297, 399, 530, 641, 642, 660, 674, 678) **Low level of pupils g** (93, 466, 541, 542, 725) **Heavy work load :h** (352, , 570, 584, 683, 764) **Other::i** (44, 48, 70, 71, 180, 183, 201, 261, 281, 283, 339, 429, 501, 532, 720, 782)	6, 20, 21, 22, 30, 36, 45, 47, 49, 69, 72, 82, 94, 97, 98, 100, 109, 117, 124, 140, 141, 142, 144, 145, 146, 152, 153, 164, 166, 167, 171, 176, 179, 184, 185, 186, 188, 189, 194, 195, 197, 202, 203, 204, 205, 208, 220, 224, 226, 228, 230, 231, 232, 235, 241, 245, 246, 247, 250, 252, 253, 257, 264, 267, 271, 272, 276, 284, 285, 290, 293, 300, 302, 303, 312, 321, 325, 327, 335, 338, 344, 351, 353, 356, 357, 361, 379, 382, 384, 394, 396, 407, 409, 410, 416, 419, 422, 426, 440, 441, 445, 447, 448, 454, 455, 456, 460, 467, 468, 472, 476, 478, 486, 490, 495, 496, 505, 508, 509, 515, 517, 525, 534, 536, 544, 547, 566, 567, 568, 573, 590, 592, 596, 597, 600, 601, 602, 606, 616, 628, 632, 634, 645, 646, 656, 658, 669, 694, 696, 697, 698, 700, 701, 705, 706, 711, 712, 713, 718, 719, 726, 728, 731, 732, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 744, 750, 753, 757, 758, 759, 760, 765, 766, 771, 772, 773, 776, 780, 783	13, 90, 92, 135, 136, 154, 165, 215, 238, 244, 279, 280, 295, 326, 348, 349, 350, 386, 397, 408, 439, 442, 481, 569, 635, 639, 644, 648, 662, 663, 667, 668, 723, 770	95, 150, 255, 286, 301, 305, 307, 381, 403, 406, 430, 453, 595, 607, 608, 625, 649, 661, 708

Data-coding sheet 4 **Question 24 What are the differences between LC and LAMP (Total 416)**

LC ignores teachers' roles while LAMP recognises teachers' roles (Total 188) a	**There is no clear difference found between the LC and LAMP from the exaplanations provided (Total 172) b**	**In LC, learners are relatively passive while in LAMP learners are more active and autonomous. (Total 33) c**	**Other (Total 23) d**
1, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 29, 31, 37, 38, 39, 42, 48, 49, 50, 53, 54, 58, 60, 62, 63, 66, 83, 93, 94, 95, 97, 104, 107, 109, 110, 125, 127, 130, 131, 132, 133, 140, 143, 157, 159, 160, 168, 170, 172, 175, 177, 182, 183, 185, 188, 189, 197, 202, 214, 215, 217, 218, 230, 236, 237, 239, 240, 241, 246, 257, 269, 273, 274, 283, 290, 303, 308, 311, 319, 320, 322, 344, 347, 353, 354, 355, 356, 382, 385, 391, 399, 405, 406, 416, 418, 419, 421, 422, 432, 433, 444, 472, 474, 476, 478, 482, 484, 492, 498, 501, 519, 521, 523, 525, 526, 530, 533, 536, 537, 547, 548, 563, 566, 572, 580, 586, 595, 606, 608, 609, 610, 622, 629, 631, 632, 650, 651, 656, 657, 663, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 679, 680, 684, 685, 686, 687, 696, 698, 704, 706, 709, 710, 712, 715, 720, 721, 722, 726, 730, 734, 740, 746, 748, 749, 750, 753, 754, 758, 759, 762, 770, 771, 772, 774, 775, 777, 780, 782, 783	3, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 32, 36, 40, 41, 47, 51, 52, 55, 56, 59, 68, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 80, 82, 84, 85, 87, 88, 89, 92, 96, 98, 105, 112, 115, 116, 118, 121, 126, 134, 135, 141, 156, 161, 169, 174, 181, 198, 205, 206, 207, 211, 224, 249, 250, 262, 277, 278, 286, 288, 292, 293, 297, 299, 301, 309, 312, 314, 315, 323, 327, 329, 330, 335, 336, 340, 349, 368, 379, 386, 400, 404, 407, 415, 420, 437, 441, 443, 446, 454, 460, 463, 467, 471, 485, 494, 499, 500, 502, 507, 512, 513, 514, 518, 527, 532, 541, 542, 543, 545, 561, 564, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 578, 584, 585, 587, 588, 590, 591, 594, 597, 598, 600, 603, 607, 615, 617, 619, 628, 636, 641, 643, 652, 661, 662, 665, 674, 675, 681, 682, 688, 697, 702, 703, 705, 707, 708, 711, 717, 718, 719, 731, 732, 737, 741, 742, 755, 756, 757, 760, 763, 768, 769, 773, 784, 785, 786	30, 33, 144, 146, 147, 148, 149, 165, 166, 180, 187, 193, 209, 225, 255, 256, 270, 282, 302, 334, 339, 346, 417, 435, 468, 520, 633, 649, 676, 683, 691, 693, 778	45, 61, 65, 124, 184, 363, 367, 398, 455, 480, 562, 583, 589, 637, 638, 644, 654, 655, 725, 727, 738, 779, 781

Data-coding sheet 5 **Question 25 Should we promote the LAMP approach? Why? What are some of the difficulties?**

Main reasons for promoting the LAMP approach? (Total 329)					
1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 32, 35, 40, 41, 47, 48, 49, 53, 54, 57, 62, 63, 64, 74, 76, 77, 78, 80, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 107, 108, 109, 110, 113, 114, 115, 116, 119, 121, 122, 123, 125, 132, 133, 135, 141, 142, 143, 145, 146, 147, 149, 151, 158, 165, 167, 170, 176, 179, 183, 186, 189, 190, 192, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 204, 205, 206, 208, 209, 210, 213, 214, 215, 216, 219, 220, 224, 232, 234, 235, 239, 240, 241, 246, 248, 252, 255, 256, 257, 258, 260, 261, 262, 263, 265, 266, 267, 273, 274, 284, 285, 287, 289, 293, 295, 296, 298, 302, 303, 304, 307, 308, 310, 312, 313, 314, 317, 319, 320, 321, 322, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 332, 334, 336, 337, 338, 345, 347, 348, 352, 355, 356, 363, 370, 371, 375, 378, 381, 384, 386, 389, 389, 390, 392, 407, 409, 410, 416, 421, 424, 425, 427, 428, 429, 430, 432, 434, 435, 437, 438, 441, 443, 445, 449, 456, 457, 458, 461, 464, 465, 466, 469, 470, 471, 473, 474, 484, 488, 490, 491, 492, 497, 508, 509, 510, 511, 517, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 526, 527, 528, 531, 536, 537, 538, 540, 543, 544, 546, 547, 548, 549, 561, 562, 564, 565, 567, 568, 569, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 581, 582, 589, 590, 593, 594, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 603, 608, 614, 615, 619, 620, 622, 623, 625, 628, 629, 630, 632, 635, 644, 648, 654, 655, 663, 664, 665, 667, 669, 671, 676, 677, 679, 680, 683, 685, 686, 687, 690, 692, 694, 695, 699, 700, 702, 704, 706, 708, 709, 710, 713, 715, 719, 720, 721, 723, 724, 725, 726, 730, 731, 732, 741, 746, 748, 753, 754, 755, 757, 758, 760, 761, 763, 766, 769, 775, 777, 779, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786				
It changes the traditional spoon-feed way of teaching and makes learners masters of their own learning.(Total 49) **a**	It goes in line with the new curriculum and educational objectives (Total 35) **b**	It benefits students. They can learn to know what and how to learn more effectively (17) **c**	It bebefifs students because it helps motivate and activate learners and help build up their confidence, promote individual characters, increase participation which lead to effective learning. (Total 164) **d**	It benefits students in terms of personal development and individual characters (51) **e**	Other comments (14) **f**
1, 24, 26, 27, 35, 62, 64, 74, 78, 107, 122, 123, 141, 145, 149, 151, 186, 198, 200, 201, 255, 258, 287, 289, 302, 307, 310, 334, 363, 386, 390, 465, 474, 508, 510, 524, 548, 593, 594, 625, 644, 663, 665, 680, 683, 694, 699, 700, 724	108, 110, 115, 119, 158, 167, 170, 205, 208, 240, 252, 263, 295, 296, 345, 355, 356, 389, 432, 435, 456, 464, 497, 526, 549, 575, 589, 615, 628, 629, 706, 710, 720, 732, 755	28, 32, 109, 213, 214, 216, 235, 303, 325, 445, 457, 490, 523, 538, 540, 544, 671	2, 4, 40, 41, 47, 57, 63, 80, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 100, 101, 102, 104, 113, 114, 121, 132, 133, 135, 142, 147, 165, 176, 179, 183, 189, 190, 192, 197, 199, 202, 206, 209, 210, 215, 219, 224, 232, 234, 239, 241, 248, 256, 257, 260, 261, 262, 274, 284, 285, 293, 298, 304, 308, 312, 313, 314, 317, 319, 320, 321, 322, 324, 326, 327, 332, 337, 338, 347, 348, 352, 375, 378, 381, 384, 389, 392, 409, 410, 424, 427, 428, 429, 430, 434, 437, 443, 449, 470, 471, 473, 484, 488, 491, 509, 517, 520, 521, 522, 527, 528, 531, 536, 537, 543, 547, 562, 568, 569, 573, 574, 577, 581, 582, 590, 597, 599, 608, 619, 620, 630, 632, 635, 648, 654, 664, 667, 669, 676, 677, 679, 690, 692, 695, 704, 708, 709, 713, 715, 721, 723, 730, 731, 746, 748, 753, 757, 760, 761, 763, 766, 775, 777, 779, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786	3, 7, 25, 48, 49, 53, 54, 103, 125, 143, 146, 204, 220, 246, 265, 266, 267, 273, 328, 329, 336, 370, 371, 407, 416, 425, 438, 441, 458, 461, 466, 469, 511, 546, 561, 576, 596, 598, 600, 601, 603, 614, 622, 623, 685, 686, 719, 726, 754, 758, 769	76, 77, 116, 252, 421, 492, 564, 565, 567, 655, 687, 702, 725, 741

***Data coding sheet 5* continued**

Difficulties spelt out for implementing LAMP/LC (Total 516)						
Due to students' reasons (Total 124)	Due to Ts' reasons (Total 39)	Due to administrative reasons (Total 236)	Lack of support from parents or school **k** (Total 36)	Lack of language environ-ment **l** (Total 17)	Constrain-ed by the test system **m** (Total 37)	Textbook too difficult **n** (Total 13)
• **Ss too young, lack of self-control a** (Total 70): 4, 27, 81, 141, 142, 143, 180, 186, 189, 190, 210, 216, 257, 264, 275, 298, 303, 317, 319, 325, 331, 334, 347, 348, 352, 389, 390, 398, 407, 411, 434, 443, 449, 456, 465, 484, 486, 490, 494, 499, 500, 522, 523, 527, 528, 531, 537, 541, 549, 567, 573, 589, 597, 644, 653, 663, 676, 677, 690, 704, 723, 725, 732, 754, 757, 760, 767, 777, 779, 781 • **Ss come from the countryside with disadvantages b** (Total 7): 59, 205, 229, 250, 283, 313, 759 • **Ss' limited knowledge and ability in the target language c** (Total 16) 15, 18, 118, 127, 180, 200, 201, 219, 418, 448, 450, 510, 697, 766, 775, 777 • **Ss language level & learning capability vary d** (Total 31) 45, 50, 64, 70, 101, 102, 103, 104, 107, 108, 111, 151, 199, 202, 421, 441, 490, 509, 511, 538, 540, 547, 568, 577, 582, 593, 654, 676, 678, 697, 710	**Lack of theory; managerial skills, or low linguistic ability (e)** 7, 35, 44, 45, 48, 54, 105, 109, 135, 145, 165, 202, 215, 239, 263, 308, 321, 335, 407, 413, 421, 430, 445, 465, 474, 520, 526, 589, 619, 628, 655, 665, 680, 708, 719, 755, 775, 782, 783	• **Workload too heavy f** (Total 12): 235, 279, 356, 389, 409, 459, 574, 600, 601, 725, 730, 758 • **Lack of class time; g** (Total 38): 46, 88, 98, 113, 114, 151, 204, 209, 210, 235, 236, 247, 249, 312, 319, 356, 370, 371, 418, 508, 536, 539, 540, 543, 547, 562, 601, 633, 635, 648, 669, 679, 683, 708, 720, 724, 744, 761 • **Large classes - problem of discipline, impossible for teachers to cater for individual needs h** (Total 130) 47, 50, 57, 63, 64, 78, 93, 95, 97, 112, 113, 114, 118, 119, 128, 130, 132, 133, 143, 149, 151, 155, 156, 165, 183, 199, 206, 208, 209, 213, 214, 224, 234, 235, 236, 246, 249, 255, 258, 260, 261, 262, 263, 277, 279, 280, 285, 289, 293, 304, 317, 324, 338, 370, 371, 378, 381, 384, 408, 417, 428, 435, 441, 464, 466, 470, 471, 473, 486, 487, 491, 499, 506, 509, 515, 521, 537, 538, 539, 540, 544, 562, 563, 564, 568, 574, 580, 581, 589, 591, 592, 593, 594, 601, 603, 622, 630, 631, 632, 635, 644, 648, 667, 669, 670, 672, 678, 683, 692, 695, 706, 714, 715, 720, 721, 724, 726, 731, 732, 744, 753, 755, 757, 758, 760, 763, 767, 768, 785, 786 • **Lack of resources; i** (Total 53) 49, 104, 135, 165, 170, 204, 205, 209, 215, 222, 224, 227, 232, 233, 240, 247, 248, 249, 257, 264, 279, 285, 303, 314, 319, 320, 321, 322, 327, 332, 347, 370, 371, 372, 384, 389, 448, 511, 520, 536, 579, 597, 600, 615, 657, 709, 719, 726, 732, 746, 757, 767, 783, • **Poor school management j:** 783, 784, 786	28, 45, 54, 62, 93, 118, 121, 136, 142, 145, 154, 205, 224, 227, 229, 235, 236, 240, 279, 302, 347, 378, 416, 429, 432, 564, 569, 657, 667, 671, 683, 695, 709, 713, 724, 726	247, 259, 274, 320, 322, 355, 377, 409, 419, 448, 451, 508, 520, 527, 657, 671, 782,	24, 32, 33, 69, 93, 94, 97, 98, 101, 102, 125, 154, 302, 312, 321, 334, 348, 396, 397, 408, 424, 425, 438, 440, 441, 457, 470, 488, 492, 524, 533, 564, 590, 595, 650, 713, 730	142, 202, 204, 224, 418, 575, 576, 633, 635, 657, 665, 679, 730
Other reasons **o**: (Total 14) 1, 208, 367, 397, 472, 520, 534, 565, 567, 625, 702, 714, 741, 759						

Appendix 14 There is support but ...

- Lack of teaching facilities, resources and teaching aids (No. 12, 15, 161, 262, 320, 322, 332, 334, 337, 371, 388, 389, 393, 412, 459, 512, 513, 523, 580, 742, and 748)
- Lack of personal capabilities which include language proficiency, teaching experiences, and self-confidence (in terms of language No. 239, 263, ,337, 347, 571, 418; in terms of experiences No.693, 574; in terms of capabilities (No. 60, 330, 354, 363; in terms of self-confidence, No. 24, 55, 216, 747).
- Lack of support and understanding from parents (No. 89, 268, 269, 270, 331, 393, 398, 417, 528, 562, 563, 675, 676, 733, 734, 755, and 769)
- The assessment system is not compatible with the new curriculum (No. 137, 143, 297, 399, 530, 641, 642, 660, 674, and 678)
- Low level of pupils (No. 93, 466, 541, 542, 725)
- Heavy work-load on the part of the teacher (No. 352, 570, 584, 683, 764)

Appendix 15 The unfavourable context for curriculum change

- Lack of support and understanding from the society, school leaders and parents. Often, school leaders hold conservative ideology, parents have unrealistic expectations for their children, they do not think English is an important school subject and they are not aware of the new curriculum for they value the teaching of knowledge rather than cultivating capability. (No.22, 36, 49, *135*, 141, 144, *165*, 167,176, 178, 187, 188, 189, 194, 195, 197, 228, 230, *238*, 257, *280*, 300, 302, 303 344, 349, *386*, 394, 573, 726, 472, 544, 632, 634, 728, 750, 759, 760, 290, 302, 339, 382, 476, 515, 517, 596, *644*, *662*, *663*, 700, *723*, and 757).
- Constraints of the school management/administrative system (No.*136*, 145, 379, 416, 445, 566, 645, 597, and 600)
- Constraints from the assessment system (No.69, 90, 92, 97, 98, 109, 117, 140, 146,153, 154, 164, 167, 226, 267, 276, 322, *348*, 361, 396, *397*, 407, 408, 419, 422, 440, 441, 442, 547, 590, 697, and 739)
- Location of the school in the countryside and mountainous regions with no emphasis on English and lack of good learning environment. (No.6, 20, 22, 466, 467, 468, 490, 573, and 736)
- Lack of teaching facilities and resources. (No.*13*, 22, 142, 166, 167, 203, *244*, 257, 271, *350*, 351, 384, 410, 412, *439*, 441, 448, 460, 515, 525, 606, 712, 718, and 719)
- Large classes (No.82, 100, 235, *244*, 245, 252, 335, 384, *439*, 455, 478, 495, 496, 648, 705, 726, 728, 757, and 780)
- Discipline problems (No.184, 257, 737, 738, 753, 764, 765, and773)
- The old system and the new curriculum clash with each other (No.534, 592, 602, 642, and 735)
- Lack of teaching hours for the subject (No.584, 601, 646, 669, 701, 706, 713, 718, 771, and 772)
- Low value of English as a school subject (No.224, No.656)
- Perceived personal incapability (No.*244*, *439*, and 495)
- Lack of teaching staff and heavy workload (No.*295*, *350*, 353, 616, and 426)
- Low level and low ability of students in self-regulation (No.48, 93, 142, 284, 508, and 628)
- Curriculum change is a long process. It is an ideological revolution which takes time…10 years, 20 years …(No.783)

Appendix 16 Lesson transcripts (two examples)

Transcription symbols:
Italics = for things said in Chinese
(.) pause
(..) longer pause
… unfinished or eliciting
(xxx) cannot be heard clearly
{Something which is said at the same time.

Lesson transcripts: Example 1:

T1 27-April-2005
School Name Beijing No 3 Zhongguancun Primary School, Haidian District
Level of students: Grade 1 (age 6-7) 1st year of learning English
Textbook: Xinqidian English (People's Education Press).
Lesson duration: 40 minutes
Lesson topic: Clothes
Student number: 40

00:0
The bell rings and the class become quiet.

00.34
T. OK. Class begins.
SS. Stand up, please.
T. Good morning, boys and girls.
SS. Good morning, Ms Xu….(xxx)
T. How are you today?
S1. I'm very very very..
T. David?
D. I'm very, very happy.
T. Wow, you are very happy.

0.50
T. What is your favourite toy? Joy.
S2. My favourite toy is (..) dog..
T. Because…
S2. Because dogs are beautiful.
T. Thank you. Whose favourite toy is boat?

Ss. My favourite toy is boat because boats can flow in the water. (About 8-10 children stood up and said it together with gestures showing that boat can flow in the water)

1.50
T. Who is wearing blue today, do you remember the song?
SS. Yes.
T. Peter. Come here. Are you ready? One, two!
SS. (Sing the song together)
Who is wearing yellow today, today, yellow today?
Who is wearing yellow today, yellow today. (change colours (blue, green) and sang three times).
T. Thank you. Good job. Give yourself a card.

2.45
T. Look, Blandy is wearing a blue jacket, isn't she? And Jenny is wearing a blue T-shirt. OK. Let's learn a new unit today. Unit 4 Clothes.
T. Clothes. (Pointing at the word on the BB, expecting children to repeat after her)
SS. Clothes.
T. Clothes
SS. Clothes.
T. Clothes
SS. Clothes.(Repeated three times together)
T. *Let's all see which child learns fast*

3.45
T. I have a lot of clothes here. (T shows different kinds of clothes using cards).
SS. Wow (low voice showing surprises)
T. I know 'Skirt', what clothes do you know?
S3. I know (xxx)
T. Louder, please
S3. I know a cap.
T. Thank you, David.
S4. I know 'T-shirt'.
T. Oh, the T-shirt.
S5. I know 'jacket'.
T. Benson, Good job! Very loud voice! (in Chinese) Joe?
S6. I know (.) jacket.
T. Oh, you know jacket, too. Thank you, Joe.

5.03
T. Let's listen and watch. What clothes can you hear. JERRY! (calling for his attention)
(T plays the tape-recorder: a chant and colourful clothes flash on the screen)
T-shirt, T-shirt, a pink T-shirt.
Skirt, skirt, a purple skirt.

Jacket, jacket, a green jacket.
Sweater, sweater, a red sweater.
Shorts, shorts, orange shorts.
Pants, pants, blue pants.

5.50
T. Again?
Ss. Again!
T. (Plays the recorder again)

7.00
T. Good job. What can you hear?
S7. Colours.(in Chinese)
T. (plays the recorder again.) Tina.
T. Now, what clothes?
S8 (Tina) I can hear blue pants.
T. I can hear..
S9 I can hear.green ja..
T. Jacket. Bobby?
S10 (Bobby). I can hear green jacket.
T. Tilly.
S11 (Tilly) I can hear T-skirt.
T. A T-shirt. Adam?
S12 (Adam) I can hear orange, orange shorts.
T. One more, last one. David. (children were seen very eager to give their answers, holding their hands high and showing eagerness with en,en,en sounds)
S13. I can hear a red (.) I can hear a red…
T. Sweater, red sweater.

9.00
T. Skirt, skirt
SS Skirt, skirt.
T. Shirt, shirt.
SS. Shirt, shirt.
T. Peter! (calling for attention). *Some children are not speaking loudly I cannot hear them.*
T. skirt, skirt.
SS. skirt, skirt (with obviously louder voice).
T. Peter.
S14.(Peter) Skirt, skirt
S15. Skirt, skirt.
T. Robben. Who is Robben? Robben. (Robben was not listening)
S16. (Robben) Skirt, skirt. Tom, Steven (individual practice) (S17-S20)

T. This one (showing picture of a T-shirt and children followed to repeat in the same manner.)

10.50
T. Who is wearing a T-shirt today? Stand up.(several children stood up who were wearing T-shirts)
T. Well, a lot of T-shirts. A lot of T-shirts. Sit down.
T. And how about this one?
SS. Sweater.
T. Sweater, sweater.
SS. Sweater,sweater.

11.25
T. (Teacher finds that some children have difficulty pronouncing /w/. She tried to correct children's pronunciation.) Look. The teacher is making a mistake. How is she saying 'sweater'? svet /, /svet /.
Ss. *Teacher has her teeth on her lower lip.*
T. Right. The teacher has made a mistake. I was wrong. Now, I am going to correct myself. Follow me.
T. Sweater, sweater.
SS. T. Sweater, sweater. (A few more times and with individual checking: Billy).

12.35.
T. Work with your neighbours. Check with each other.
(Pair checking the pronunciation of sweater).

12.48
T. (Takes out the picture of a jacket)
S21. Jacket.
T. Jacket, jacket.
T. Who is wearing a jacket? Stand up.
T. Who else? Benson you are wearing a jacket. Bob, you are wearing a jacket.
(more practice in this way with other words (shorts, pants) as a whole class and also as individuals.)

14.05
T. Roger, close your books! What are these?
SS. Shorts, shorts.
T. Louder, please.
SS. Louder, please.
T. What are these?
T. Pants, pants./p/ /p/
SS. /p/ /p/
T. Pants, pants.

SS. Pants, pants. (This is repeated with individual children) (S22-S28)

16.40
T.[Now, a question for you. Listen. You observe very carefully. There are two words that they sound alike and they also look alike. 'skirt and shorts'. Who can help me to find their differences?]
S29. [Their endings are different. 'Skirt' has no 's', 'shorts' has not].
T. Louder, please.
SS. Louder, please.
S30. *One is shorter, one is longer.*
T. *Which is shorter? Which is longer?*
S29. Skirt *is shorter.* Shorts *is longer.*
T. *We will see who has observed really carefully and who has come up with the most effective way to remember them.*
S31. *The second letter of* 'skirt' *is* 'k' *and the second letter of* 'shorts' *is* 'h'.
T. *She said the second letter of* 'skirt' *is* 'k', *and the second letter of* 'shorts' *is* 'h'. *I think we all have our own ways to distinguish them, not necessarily the same way. I will tell you how I make the difference. You don't have to follow my way. You may have your own ways. But this is for your reference.*
T. Shorts *has two trouser legs, therefore, an* 's' *at the beginning*
SS. { *an* 's' *at the end.* / *an* 's' *at the end*
T. Very good. *Of course, you can have your own ways.*

19.00
T. (raises word cards, and children say the words)

19.27. A game.
T. Now, I need some children to come to help me. Who'd like to come? (T invited six children to the front of the classroom and each was given a picture card. They were told to hold the card high and listen to the teacher. The teacher stands behind the six children who were facing the class and take out a word card to show the class. The class then shout out the word 'T-shirt, T-shirt, turn around!' The child, among the six, who was holding the right picture should turn around. T did this for the first two times and then invited some children to be the teacher by saying 'who would like to be the Teacher?' and children were all very eager to be the teacher. The game went on with several groups of children.
T. Let's say it together. (At one time during the game) Sally, let's try to say it with the others, alright, Sally? One, two!
T. Oh, good job. Hold it up. Are you ready? Are you ready? One, two!
SS. Shorts, shorts, turn around.
SS. T-shirt, T-shirt, turn around (following the T with other words).
T. *When some children could not hear the word clearly, they could not do it properly. So, let' say it together clearly and see who will understand us.*
T. *Some children are not paying attention.* Come on. One, two!

SS. (They together say the words and the game continues).

23.10.
T. Now, you have one minute to remember the clothes and their colours. Let's see who can remember them quickly and well. (Pictures of colourful clothes shown on the blackboard.)
(Children were seen trying to remember the names and colours of the clothes. When they finish they would stand up one by one to show the teacher that they have done it. When one minute ends the teacher recognised the number of children who had finished.
T. Have you finished?
Ss. No/Yes
T. (Counted with the class) 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.
T. What are green?
S32. The shorts are green.

25.00
T. Who wants to be the teacher?
S33. What is orange?
T. What is orange? (children were very eager to participate.)
S34. Yellow.
S35. Jacket.
T. Thank you.The jacket is orange.
S36. The jacket is orange.
T. Who can be the teacher?
S37. What is green?
T. Is the jacket green?
SS. No.
S38. What is red?
T. What's red? Joe.
S39. The sweater.
T. The sweater.
T. The last one (children were all eager to participate).
T. Stand up if you like the yellow T-shirt. (Some children stand up).
T. Stand up if you like the red sweater.
T. Stand up if you like the shorts. (Some children stand up).
T. *Bobby, you have not spoken, have you?*
Bobby: *Yes, I did.* (Showing a little colourful piece of paper.)
T. OK. You, please.
S40. Stand up if you like blue jacket. (Some children stood up.)
Stand up if you like the red sweater. (Some children stood up.)

29.00
T. One, two, three, four, four in a group. 'Stand up if you..'. (Children all work in groups and do the activity by themselves.

31.10
T. Open your books Page 42.
T. What wrong, Joe?
S. I cannot find my book.
T. It's OK.
T. Take out your sticker and choose three to put into your closet. Let's see who are the first ten to finish the task. (The teacher then notifies each one child who has finished to encourage other children to follow good examples).

35.00
T. Now, Put your sticker away. Put your stickers away. Bobby has been really good. Tilly, I am very disappointed about you behaviour. Very good! Listen. Listen. In my closet, I have a green jacket, a pink T-shirt, blue pants and purple shorts and I like the pink the T-shirt. Who can?
T. OK. Peter Hu. *Now let's listen to Peter Hu. Let's see who is a good listener. Who is attentive in listening.*
Ss. *We cannot see.*
T. Oh, sorry.
T. (Showing the child's closet over the projector and helps the child to describe his closet.
S41 (Peter Hu): In my closet, I have a blue cap. I like the (..) yellow shirt.
T. I like the yellow T-shirt.
S41. I like the yellow T-shirt.
T. OK. Thank you.
36.55
T Everybody, with your neighbours, in my closet, I have a , a.., and a..I like the..Can you?.
(T goes around and monitors the children's oral practice).
39.29
Homework: April 28th. *Write it down. We must read, speak and listen how many times?*
SS. *Five times.*
T. *Yes. Five times. O.K Then, if you like tell your parents about your closet.*
40.30
T. Close your books. O.K, class is over. Goodbye, boys and girls.
Ss. Goodbye, Ms Xu.

Lesson transcripts: Example 2

T3 (Ms) 16-March-2005
School Chengdu Liangshuijing Primary School, Sichuan Province
Level of students Grade 1 (age 6-7)
Textbook: Cambridage Young Learners English
Lesson Duration: 30 minutes
Lesson topic: Stationary (Asking about possessions)
Student number: 22

0.00 (Teacher talks in a natural and soft voice)
T. Clap hands three times
SS. One, two, three!
T. One, two!
SS. Three, four!
T. This is Bobby. (T holds a puppet to talk to the children). Good morning.
SS. Good morning.
T. Hello, hello. How are you?
SS. I'm fine, thank you, and you?
T. What day is today?
SS. It's Thursday.

1.40
T. My name is Tobby. I'm 3 years old. I like rabbits. Tell me about yourself (T uses the puppet to invite a child to introduce himself)
T. One two!
SS. Three four!
S1. Hello, my name is (xxx).I'm seven years old. I like toy cars. I like blue. My (..) go to school by bike.
T. I..I..
S1. I go to school by bike.
T. That's all?
S1. Thank you.

2.30
T. Who can ask questions?
S2. What colour do you like?
S3. I like blue.
T. Good.
S4. How are you?
S5. I.m fine, thank you.
T. And ..
S5 And you?
S6. What's your phone number?

T. My phone number is 10 (xxxx).
T. Any more questions?
S7. (xxx)
S8. Do you like snake?
T. No, I don't. Do you like snakes?
S8. Yes.
T. Why?
S8. I like eating snakes. (Laugh from the class)
S9. Where are you from?
T. Where are you from?
S9. Where are you from?
S10. I'm from China.
T. You are from China. OK. Now.

4.45
T. (Takes out a puppet - a toy tigar). Do you like Tobby?
SS. Yes.
T. Do you want to talk to him? Say something to him. Understand?
Children take turns to say something to Tobby.
(e.g. Hello. Good morning. Tobby. Tobby, you are strong. How are you, Tobby? Do you like toys? Hello, Tobby. How old are you? Tobby (T): I'm seven years old.) (S11-32)

6.30
T. An action game (Shows a video of Tobby, jumping and dancing and invites children to do it by counting numbers together with him. It was very enjoyable for children)

7.45
T. One, two!
SS. Three four!
T. Now, look. (T takes out a red bag). What's this in English?
Ss. It's a school bag
S33. What colour is it?
T. There are many things in it. I want you to feel it. What is it (inside)?
(One girl feels it)
S34 (Girl). It's a (..) it's a book.
T. Now take it out. Wow, it's a book..
T. (To the whole class) Let's ask her, 'Do you have a book?' (T invites other children to ask questions to the girl to find out)
SS. Do you have a book?
S34 (Girl). Yes, I do. I have a book.
Next pupil comes and put her hand inside the bag and guessed..
S35. It's a pen.
T. Is it a pen? (T holding the pen to show to the class.)
Ss. It's ball pen.

T. Do you have (.)
SS Do you have a ball pen?
S35. Yes, I do.
T. I have a (.)
S35. I have a ball-pen.

11.10
T. (takes out one thing at a time, children shout out the objects in English. Then, T dumps out all the things on the floor from the bag and take up one object one at a time)
T. Do you have a (.)
SS. pen (pencil-case, apple)?
T. Do you have a book? (T asks one child)
S36. No, I don't.
T. (gives a book to one pupil) Do you have a book?
S37. Yes, I do.

13.00
T. (T invites all the children to stand up) I have a lot of word cards. (T holds up one card, children recognise the word and move forward one step each time. When they come to close to the front. T holds up a picture of a tiger or wolf and children will have to run back to their seats). Children were very active and attentive enjoying very much the activity) [beginning word recognition]

16.00
T. (T takes out a word card and children are to find from their school bag if they have it.) What is this?
SS. Glue.
T. Do you have glue?
S38. Yes, I do.
T. Do you have glue?
S39. No. I don't.
T. I don't have glue.
S39. I don't have glue.
T. Now next one. (The game continues and the T notices individuals and went up to help.) (pencil, pencil-case)
T. Is he right?
SS. Yes.
Children: Let me try.
T. One two!
SS. Three four!
T. One, two three!
SS. Three, two, one!

19.00

T. How many pencils do you have? (repeated four times) I have two pencils.
S40. I have 4.
T. you have 4 pencils.
Ss. Let me try.
T. How many pencils do you have?
S41. I have 2.
Ss. Let me try.
T. How many pens do you have? (repeated twice)
S42. I have zero.
T. Oh, you have zero pen.
T. How many books do you have? (repeated three times)
S43. I have seven (.) book.
T. seven (.)..
S43. seven book
T. Seven (.)
S43 Seven books.

20.20
T. I have two pencils.
SS. I have two pencils.
T. Have three pens.
SS. I have three pens.
T. I have four books
SS. I have four books
T. I have ten books.
SS. I have ten books.

20.30.
T. Now let chant. I have one, you have one. OK? Stand up. Sit down. Stand up. Hands up. Hands down. Now. arm in arm. Hands up hands down. OK. Now Let's chant. (TPR)
You have one, I have one, one little child..
You have two, I have two, two little children go to school . (Children shout very loudly)

22.49. A Game.
(T have five strings connected to five objects but the strings are tangled together. Five children are invited to come to the front to take each of the end of five strings. Children were all very eager to participate the T tried to control the class by saying: One-two! Children responded by Three-four! for attention calling and a discipline signal is given).
T. Let's guess. Who has the ruler? Who has glue? Who has the ballpen?
S44. Jennifer has the ruler.
S45. Justine has the ballpen.
T. Who has pencil?
S46. Wendy has pencil.
T. Who has (xx)

S47.(xxx)
T. Let's check. (T helps to find out who has what)
T. Oh Oh
Ss. Oh Oh.
T. Who has the ruler?
T. Wendy has a (.)
S48.Wendy has a ball pen.
T. Zhejusheng has (.)
SS. Zhejusheng has a pen.
T. Who has the glue? Jenny has (.)
SS. Jenny has the glue.
Ss. Let me try, let me try! (There was no time for another try).

27.00
T. Do you like this classroom?
S49. Yes. I like our classroom
T. What can you see in this classroom? I can see (..)
S50.(xxx)
T. Do you like our classroom?
S51. Yes I do.

27. 30
A song 'In our happy classroom' and end of the lesson.

Appendix 17 Lesson transcripts in formatted tables (two examples)

Formatted observation data – example 1 T1 Grade 1 27-April-2005

Time	Stage of the lesson	Activity	Teacher activity	Pupil activity	Main interaction patterns	Teacher roles	Pupil questions	Other observations and comments	Timing
0.34	Class begins	Daily greetings	T said 'Good morning'	Children greeted the T	T-WC; T-S1		NA	40 children sat in six lines and seven rows and the classroom was rather full	16"
0.50		Teacher questions	T asked David how he was today and Joy what was his/her favourte toy. Then T probes by adding 'because..' and wait for Joy. Then T asked the whole class whose favourite toy was boat.	David said he was very very happy. Joy said his favourite toy was DOG. He added because dogs were beautiful. For the next question, about 8-10 children stood up and said 'my favourite toy is boat because boat can flow on water.	T-S2;	guide	NA	Individualised and teacher encouraged more meaningful answers and waited for ss' answers.	1 min

1.50	New Lesson- Warm up	A song 'who is wearing blue today'	T asked children if they remember the song and invites one child to the front to sing together with the class.	Children sang the song together three times and changed the colour words in the song each time they sang it from yellow, to blue and to green.	Whole class	organiser	NA	Children sang the song three times and changed the colour word each time they sang it. T praised the whole class and awarded the boy with a small piece of colourful paper card.	55"
2.45	Introduc-ing the new lesson	Teacher told children that they were going to learn a new unit: clothes.	T told children about the topic of the unit and wrote the topic 'Clothes' on the blackboard and asked children to repeat after her three times.	Children repeated the word 'Clothes' after the T three times.	T-WC	guide	NA	T told the children she wanted to find out who could learn really fast.	1 min
3.45		Learning new words	T took out a set of pictures of different clothes. T said that she knew the word 'skirt', and encouraged children to say what they knew. T praised one child who spoke with a very loud voice.	Six children stood up one by one and said a word that they knew. E.g. I know 'cap'; I know 'T-shirt", etc.	T-S3; T-S4; T-S5; T-S6	guide	NA	Children were seen eager to say what they knew. T encouraged children of different abilities to do what they could. T praised the child who spoke with a very loud voice to show her expectations.	**1'18"**

5.03	Input with a song	Listening	T plays the tape of a song with different clothes names and their colours. After the first listening. T asked children if they wanted to listen to the second time. Children said yes. So T played tape again.	Children listen to the song and try to identify any words they hear from the song.	T-WC	manager	NA	Children listened to the song with interest	47"
5.50	Again	Listening	T plays the tape of the song again when she finds that only one child responded that he heard words of colours in Chinese and all the other children wanted to listen to it again.	Children listen to the song again.	T-WC	Input provider and monitor	NA		1'10"
7.00	Check-ing	Teacher questions	T asked individual children what clothes they have heard in the song.	Some children volunteered answers by saying: "I can hear blue pants."	T-S7; T-S8; T-S9; T-S10; T-S11; T-S12; T-S13	guide and assesser	NA	Children were very eager to say what they have heard with their hands holding high	2 mins

9.00	Presentation of new words	Children repeat after the teacher	T said 'Skirt' 'T-shirt', etc. and the whole class repeated. Then teacher nominated a few individual children to give them practice. T called attention of one child who was not listening.	The whole class first repeated the words after the teacher and then a few individual children were nominated to repeat the words after the teacher.	T-S14.... S20	Input provider	NA		1'50"
10.50	Practice of new words	Teacher questions and more repetitions	T asked those children who were wearing a T-shirt today to stand up.	Those children who were wearing a T-shirt stood up.	T-WC	Input provider and organiser	NA		35"
11.25		Getting pronunciation right	After T presents 'sweater', she modelled the wrong pronunciation for children to notice the problems. She said she has made a mistake and she was trying to correct herself. She then gave the correct model again.	Children repeat after the teacher together first. Then when the teacher tells children that she could not pronounce the word correctly. Children were quick to notice the problem.	T-WC; SS-T	guide	NA	T draws children's attention to the positions of lips and the teeth when pronouncing the word. Children are given the opportunity to observe and find out the problems. Developing learning strategies - noticing differences and solving problems.	1'10"

12.35	Focus on pronunciation	pair checking	T asked children to work in pairs to check each other's pronunciation of 'sweater'.	Children checked in pairs about the pronunciation of 'sweater'.	S-S	organiser	NA	Children are made active in learning by themselves and help each other.	13"
12.48		Practice with new words	T took out the picture of a jacket and asked those who was wearing a jacket to stand up. T then noticed a few children who did not stand up but were wearing a jacket. Then T took out more pictures and did the same activity	Those children who were wearing a jacket stood up and a few others after the T's nominations also stood up. Children repeated after the teacher as a whole class and also with a few individuals	T-WC; T-S21	Input provider and organiser	NA	Repetition and questioning to draw children's attention. T reminded some individual children to pay attention.	1'17"
14.05		Repetitions	T asked the whole class as well as individuals to repeat the new words after her. E.g. shorts, pants, etc.	Children repeated after the teacher together and some individual children were nominated by the teacher to repeat the words.	T-WC; T-S22 … S28	controllor	NA		2'35"

16.40	Develop-ing cognitive strategies	Find differences	T asked children to find the differences between the two words 'shorts' and 'skirt' and encouraged them to tell the class how they could remember the two words effectively.	Children were very active and three children volunteered their observations.	S29-WC; S30-WC; S31-WC	guide	NA	Children were trying to contribute and gave their opinions. T gave her own opinions of the differences and told children that they could have their own ways of remembering the words.	2'20"
19.00	Whole class review of the new words		T took out some word cards one by one for children to say them loudly together.	Children said the new words together following the pictures T took out.	T-WC	controller	NA		27"
19.27	Practice of new words	A game	T gave instructions and nominated six children to come to the front and each was given a picture of clothes.	Six children came to the front facing the class, each with a picture of a piece of clothes. T stood behind them, showed a word card to the whole class. Then the class said a rhyme. E.g. 'skirt, skirt, turn around.' The child holding that particular picture of a shirt would need to turn round.	T-WC-SS	guide and participant	NA	Children were very active and excited to participate in the game. Each was involved as they had to see the word card in the T's hand and also judge if the right child had reacted to what they said.	3'43"

23.10	Practice of new words in combina-tion with colours	A memorisation game	Teacher gave children one minute to remember the clothes and their colours shown on the pictures. Then acknowledged those who had finished the task and then she gave a 10-second count-down to end the activity and started to ask questions; e.g. what is green?	Children tried to remember the clothes and their colours. When they finished they would stand up to show to the teacher that they had finished. One child answered the teacher question.	Individual work; T-WC; T-S32	manager	NA	All children were seen trying to remember the clothes and their colours. Whoever finished would stand up to show to the class that she/he had done it. The teacher would name them one by one to acknowledge their efforts. Children have formed the habit of working hard on a task given and then stand up to show that they have finished to try to meet the teacher's expectations.	1'50"
25.00	More free practice	Who want's to be the teacher?	Teacher encouraged children to be the teacher to ask questions to other children.	Four children volunteered to be the teacher and asked questions to another child that the T nominated.	S33-S34; S35-S36; S37-S38; S39-S40; S40-WC	guide and helper	Yes.	The teacher tried to help the little teacher by repeating his/her questions to the whole class. Although children were unable to ask questions like a real teacher but children liked it a lot	2'25"
27.25	TPR practice	T gave instructions and children acted according to T's instructions	T said: stand up if you like the red sweater; stand up if you like the blue jacket; Stand up if you like the yellow T-shirt	Children acted accordingly to what the teacher said.	T-WC	organiser	NA	Children stood up if they liked the colour and clothes the teacher said. Children could understand long sentences and react according to their own preferences. Good listening activity with good involvement of the children.	1'35"

29.00	Group practice	Giving instructions and following instructions	Teacher gave instructions to make sure that children worked in groups of four and they took turns to give instructions to other children in the group.	Children worked in groups of four and took turns to give instructions to others in the group.	Group work	organizer and monitor	NA	Children initiated their own instructions and the activity became more personalised	2'10"
31.10	Hands-on activity	Put stickers of clothes into the closet on the textbook	T first showed children a closet with some clothes in it. She asked questions about them. Then she told children to open their textbooks and found three stickers of clothes to stick them into their own closet in the textbook. T encouraged children to finish the task as quickly as possible. The first ten would be praised.	Children opened their textbooks to page 42 and choose three stickers to put into their own closet. Whoever finished the task stood up and the teacher acknowledged them by calling numbers from the first to the tenth.	Individual work	organizer, guide and monitor	NA	T named the children who had finished and encouraged other children to follow good examples. T gave children choices in what clothes to put into their own closet. One child could not find his stickers and the teacher put him together with another child. T named those who finished first.	3'50"

35.00	Output	Describing one's own closet	T asked children to put their stickers away and praised those who followed the instructions. She described her closet by showing it on the screen.	One child volunteered and his closet was shown on the screen and he described it with the teacher's help.	T-WC; S41-WC	model and encouraging by saying: 'Who can?'	NA	T showed the child's closet on the projector so that the whole class could see it. Then T helped the child to describe it. T reminded children to be a good listener while someone else was speaking to the class	1'55"
36.55		Pair work	T asked children to work in pairs to describe their closet to each other.	Children worked in pairs and told each other about one's own closet.	S-S	monitor	NA	Children worked in pairs and tried to tell each other about one's own closet. T monitors in the classroom	2'34"
39.29	Home-work		T asked children to write down in their textbook the homework: to read, speak and listen five times and tell their parents about their closet.	Children noted down the homework in the textbook.	T-WC		NA		1'01"
40.30	End of class								

Formatted observation data – example 2 T3 Grade 1 16-March-2005

Time	Stage of the lesson	Activity	Teacher activity	Pupil activity	Main interac-tion patterns	Teacher roles	Pupil questions	Other observations and comments	Timing
0.00	Class begins	Attention calling	T clapped hands three times. Then said: one, two!	Children shouted: one, two, three upon hearing T's clapping of her hands. After T said 'one, two!', children responded by shouting loudly: 'three, four!' The class became quiet.	T-WC	manager	NA	Children were sitting in U shape on little wooden stools with no desks in the room. There was a lot of space in the centre. There was TV and video facilities in the room. T talked in a natural voice, soft but firm. Children became quiet and were ready for class.	
1.40		Child on duty	T modeled speaking and then invited a child to speak to the class. T helped and also waited for child to speak.	One child stood up and said something about himself.	T-SS; S1-WC	helper	NA		1' 40"
2.30		Children's question time.	T invited children to ask any questions to other children. T listened and asked a child some probing questions.	Children asked and answered some questions of their own with T's help.	S2-S3; S4-S5; T-S5; S6-T; S7-T; T-S7; S8-T; S9-S10.	organiser	Yes		50"

4.45		Greeting Tobby	T invited children to talk to Tobby.	Children passed on the puppet and said to it whatever they wanted to say.	children spoke one by one (All 22 pupils)	model	NA	All 22 children said something to Tobby. Something they wanted to say and were able to say.	2' 15"
6.30		Action song	T showed a video with Tobby chanting and dancing.	Children were asked to stand up and come to the centre of the room to chant and dance with Tobby.	whole class	organiser	NA	Children enjoyed the actions very much.	1' 45"
7.45	Beginning input	Touch and guess	T took out a red schoolbag and asked children what that was in English? Then T told children that there were many things in it. She wanted children to feel it and say what it is. Then she invited the class to ask using the structure: Do you have a..?	Children answered that it was a schoolbag. Then one child tried to feel it and said it was a book. She took it out. The whole class asked; Do you have a book? And the girl answered with a 'yes'. This went on with another boy.	T-S33; SS-S33; T-WC; SS-S34; SS-S35; T-S35	organiser	Yes	T shouts 'one,two', and children shouts 'three, four'. Before the activity starts	3' 25"

11.10	Review of vocabul-ary		T took out one thing at a time from the bag and expected children to say it in English. T then placed these objects on the floor. After that, T took up one object and asked two individual children 'Do you have a …?'	Children shouted out the names of the object in English one by one. When T asked one child if she/he had a pencil-case or an apply, children answered according to the real circumstances.	T-WC; T-S36; T-S37	organiser and input provider	NA	Children were very active and excited.	2' 50″
13.00	Word recogni-tion practice	Word recogni-tion activity	T holds some word cards. She invited all children to stand up and when they recognised a word they could step forward once. When the T showed a picture of a tiger or wolf, children would jump back to their seats.	Children stood up and tried to recognise the word that T held up and marched forward when they got it right. They returned to the beginning point if they saw a card of tiger or wolf.	T-WC	organiser	NA	Children were very active and excited. They could recognise the words with no difficulties. This is beginning word recognition. The classroom is filled with laughers and noises.	3'
16.00	Further word recogni-tion and more meaning-ful input	Word recogni-tion and questions and answers	T took out a word card and asked children what it was. Then T asked children if they had it or not. Children had to find from their schoolbag if they had it or not.	Pupil would need to first recognise the word and find if they have it or not. And they answered the T's question accordingly.	T-WC; T-S38; T-S39;	Organiser and assesser	NO	T kept on checking with the whole class if the answer by the child was right. When children got over-excited, T shouted 'one, two, three!', and children shouted back 'three, two, one!' Then it became quieter again.	2' 45″

19.00		T questioning	T asked children 'How many pencils do you have?' T repeated the question four times. Then she asked how many books they had.	One child volunteered to say that she had 4 pencils. Another said he had 2. A third child said he had zero pencils.	T-S40; T-S41; T-S42; T-S43	assessor	NO		57"
20.12		Repetitions	T asked children to repeat after her: I have…	Children repeated after the T together.	T-WC	input provider	NA		18"
20.30		TPR and chant	T asks children to do a chant together. Before that, she did some TPR activities get children quiet down.	Children acted according to T's instructions, e.g. stand up, sit down, hands up, hands down; arm in arm, etc. Then children chanted together very loudly, shouting.	T-WC	organiser	NA	The chant is: You have one, I have one, one little child….	. 2' 19"

22.49		A game	T had five strings connected to five objects but the strings were entangled. Five children were invited to come to the front to take one end of the five strings. Children were all very eager to participate. T tried to control the class by saying: One-two! Children responded by Three-four! Then T invited children to guess who had what.	Five children were invited to the front and took one end of the string connected to an object on the floor. Children guessed one by one. After the guessing, they checked by finding what each string was connected to. And children say again who had what.	T-SS; T-S44; T-S45; T-S46 T-S47: T-S48; T-SS.	organiser		Children all wanted to participate but there was no time for another try.	4' 11"
27.00		T question-ing	T asked children if they liked their classroom. And asked them what they could see in their classroom.	Children started to contribute by saying what they could see, e.g. I can see a…	T-S49 T-S50; T-S51.	guide	NO		30"
27.30	End of the lesson	A song	T asked children to sing the song: In our classroom together.	They sang the song together; In our happy classroom.	whole class	organiser	NA		1' 15"
29.15	Home-work								

Appendix 18 Lesson narrative descriptions (three examples)

Example 1

T1 27-April-2005
School Name Beijing No 3 Zhongguancun Primary School, Haidian District
Level of students Grade 1 (age 6-7) 1st year of learning English
Textbook: Xinqidian English (People's Education Press)
Lesson topic: Clothes
Student number: 40

0.34 40 children sit in six lines and seven rows and the classroom is rather full. T says 'Good morning'. Children greet the T. With T's greeting, David wants to say something. So T asks David how he is today. David replies that he is very very happy. T replies happily by saying 'Oh, you are very happy today. She then asks Joy what is his favourte toy. Then T probes by adding 'because..' and waits for Joy's answer. Joy says his favourite toy is DOG. He added because dogs are beautiful. Then T turns to the whole class and asks whose favourite toy is 'boat". About 8-10 children stand up and say 'my favourite toy is boat (with T's help they continue to say that) because boat can flow on the water.

1.50 T asks children if they remember the song about colours and she invites one child to the front to sing together with the class. They sing together three times and change the colour words in the song each time they sing it from yellow, to blue and to green. T praised the whole class and awarded the boy with a small piece of colourful paper card.

2.45 T tells children about the topic of the lesson today and writes the topic 'Clothes' on the blackboard and asks children to repeat after her three times. T tells the children she wants to find out who can learn really fast.

3.45 T takes out a set of pictures of different clothes. T shows some of them to the class and says that she knows the word 'skirt', and encourages children to say what they know. Six children stand up one by one and said a word that they know. E.g. I know 'cap'; I know 'T-shirt", etc. Children were seen eager to say what they know. T praises one child who speaks with a very loud voice to show her expectations

5.03 T plays the tape of a chant with different clothes names and their colours. She tells children to listen and try to identify any words they hear. After the first listening, T asked children if they wanted to listen to it the second time. Children all say yes. So T played the chant again.

5.50 T plays the tape of the chant the third time when she finds that only one child responds with a colour word in Chinese and all the other children wanted to listen to it again. Children listen to the song again.

7.00 T asks individual children what clothes they have heard in the chant. Some children volunteer answers by saying: "I can hear blue pants." Children were eager to say what they have heard with their hands holding high

9.00 The whole class repeat after the T 'skirt' 'T-shirt', etc. Then teacher nominates a few individual children to say these words. T called attention of one child who was not listening.

10.50 T asks those children who are wearing a T-shirt today to stand up and some children who are wearing a T-shirt stand up.

11.25 After T presents 'sweater', she modelled the wrong pronunciation for children to notice the problems. She said she has made a mistake and she is trying to correct herself. Children were quick to notice and point out the problem in Chinese. She then gave the correct model again. Children repeat after the teacher together again. (Children are given the opportunity to observe and find out the problems Developing learning strategies - noticing differences and solving problems.)

12.35 T asks children to work in pairs to check each other's pronunciation of the word 'sweater'. (Children are made active in learning by themselves and help each other.)

12.48 T takes out the picture of a jacket and asks the class who is wearing a jacket today to stand up. T then notices a few children who did not stand up but were wearing a jacket. Then Children repeat after the teacher as a whole class and also with a few individuals. Then T takes out more pictures and did the same activity. T reminds some individual children from time to time to pay attention and listen carefully.

14.05 T asks the whole class as well as individuals to repeat the new words after her. E.g. shorts, pants, etc. Children repeat after the teacher together and some individual children were nominated by the teacher to repeat the words.

16.40 T asks children to find the differences between the two words 'shorts' and 'skirt' and encourage them to tell the class how they can remember the two words effectively. Children were very active and three children volunteered their observations in Chinese. T gives her own opinions of the differences also in Chinese and tells children that they can have their own ways to remember the words.

19.00 T takes out pictures one by one for children to say them loudly together and children say the new words together following the pictures T takes out.

19.27 T gives instructions to a game and nominated six children to come to the front and each was given a picture of clothes. They all face the class, each with a picture of clothes. T standing behind the six children shows a word card to the whole class. Then the class will say a rhyme. E.g. 'Skirt, skirt, turn around!' The child holding the picture of a skirt will need to turn round. Children are very active and excited to participate in the game. Each is involved as they have to see the word card in the T's hand and also judge if the right child has reacted to what they have said. From time to time, the teacher is seen trying to keep individual children's attention and participation.

23.10 Teacher gives children one minute to remember the clothes and their colours shown on the pictures. Children try to remember the clothes and their colours. Those who finish the task will stand up. T then acknowledges those who has finished the task and then she gives a 10-second count-down to end the activity

and started to ask questions; what is green? One child answered the teacher question. All children are seen trying hard to try to remember and finish to meet the teacher's expectations.

25.00 Teacher encourages children to be the teacher to ask questions to other children. Four children volunteered to be the teacher and asked questions to a volunteer child that T nominates. The teacher tries to help the little teacher by repeating his/her questions to the whole class. (Although children are still young to be able to ask questions like a real teacher but the opportunity is very important)

27.25 Some TPR activity. T says: stand up if you like the red sweater; stand up if you like the blue jacket; Stand up if you like the yellow T-shirt. Children act accordingly to what the teacher says.

29.00 Teacher gives instructions to make sure that children work in groups of four and they do the say as what the teacher did in giving instructions to other children in the group. Children work in groups of four and take turns to give instructions to others in the group. Children initiate their own instructions and the activity become more personalised

31.10 T first shows children a closet with some clothes in it. She asks questions about them. Then she tells children to open their textbooks and find three stickers of clothes to stick them into their own closet in the textbook. The teacher encourages children to finish the task as quickly as possible. The first ten will be acknowledged. Children open their textbooks to page 42 and choose three stickers to put into their own closet. Whoever finishes the task will stand up and the teacher acknowledges them by calling numbers from one to ten. T gives children choices in what clothes to put into their own closet. One child could not find his stickers and the teacher put him together with another child. T kept on reminding children to be disciplined.

35.00 T asks children to put their stickers away and praised those who followed the instructions. She described her closet by showing it on the screen. The question is, What's in your closet? One child volunteered and his closet was shown on the screen and he tries hard to describe it with the teacher's help. T reminds children to be good listeners while someone else is talking to the class.

36.55 T asks children to work in pairs to practice describing their closet to each other. Children work in pairs and tell each other about one's own closet. T monitors in the classroom

39.29 T asks children to write down in their textbook the homework: to read, speak and listen five times. And tell their parents about their closet. Children note down the homework in their textbook.

40.30 End of the lesson

Appendix 18 Lesson narrative descriptions (continued)

Example 2

T3 16-March-2005
School Chengdu Liangshuijing Primary School, Sichuan Province
Level of students Grade 1 (age 6-7)
Textbook: Cambridge Young Learners' English
Lesson Duration: 30 minutes
Student number 22

Children were sitting in U shape on little wooden stools with no desks in the room. There is a lot of space in the centre. There are TV and video facilities in the room.

0.00 T claps hands three times and then says: one, two! After T says 'one, two!', children responded by shouting loudly: 'three, four!' The class becomes quiet. T talks in a natural voice, soft but firm. Children became quiet and are ready for class.

1.40 T modeled speaking using a puppet and then invites a child to speak to the class. T helps and also waits for the child to speak. The child stands up and says something about himself.

2.30 T invites children to ask any questions to other children. T listens and asked a child probing questions. Children asked and answered some questions of their own with T's help.

4.45 T invites children to talk to Tobby. Children pass on the puppet and say to it whatever they want to say. All 22 children have said something to Tobby. Something they wanted to say and were able to say.

6.30 T shows a video with Tobby chanting and dancing. Children were asked to stand up and come to the centre of the room to chant and dance with Tobby. Children enjoyed the actions very much.

7.45 T took out a red schoolbag and asked children what that is in English? Then T told children that there were many things in it. She wanted children to feel it and say what it is. Then she invites the class to ask using the structure: Do you have a..? Children answered that it was a schoolbag. Then one child tried to feel it and said it was a book. She took it out. The whole class asked; Do you have a book? The girl answered with a 'yes'. This went on with another boy. T shouts 'one, two', and children shouts 'three, four'.

11.10 T took out one thing at a time from the bag and expected children to say it in English. T then placed these objects on the floor. After that, T took up one object and asked two individual children 'Do you have a ...?' Children shouted out the names of the object in English one by one. When T asked one child if she/he had a pencil-case or an eraser, children answered according to the real circumstances. Children were very active and excited.

13.00 T holds some word cards. She invited all the children to stand up and when they recognise a word they would step forward once. When the T shows a picture of a tiger or wolf, children would jump back to their seats. Children were very active

and excited. They could recognise the words with no difficulties. This is beginning word recognition. The classroom is filled with laughter and noises.

16.00 T takes out a word card and asks children what it is and if they have it or not. Children have to find from their schoolbag if they have it or not. Pupil would need to first recognise the word and find if they have it or not. And they answer the T's question accordingly. T keeps on checking with the whole class if the answer by the child is right. When children get over-excited, T shouted 'one, two, three!', and children shouted back 'three, two, one!'

19.15 T asks children 'How many pencils do you have?' T repeats the question four times. Then she asks how many books they have. One child volunteers that she has 4 pencils. Another says he has 2. A third child says he has zero pencils. There are four children who answer the question.

20.12 T asks children to repeat after her: I have... Children repeat after the T together.

20.30 T does some TPR activities to get children to be quiet. Children acted according to T's instructions, e.g. stand up, sit down, hands up, hands down; arm in arm, etc. Then children chanted together very loudly, shouting. The chant is: You have one, I have one, one little child....

22.49 T has five strings connected to five objects but the strings are entangled together. Five children are invited to come to the front to take one end of five strings. Children were all very eager to participate. T tries to control the class by saying: One-two! Children respond by shouting 'three-four' for attention calling. Five children are invited to the front and take one end of the string connected to an object on the floor. Children guessed one by one who has the ruler, the ball-pen, the glue.... After the guessing, they checked by finding what each string is connected to. And children say again who has what.

27.00 T asked children if they liked their classroom. And ask them what they can see in their classroom. Children started to contribute by saying what they can see by saying I can see a...

27.30 T asks children to sing the song: 'In our happy classroom' together.

29.15 End of class

Appendix 18 Lesson narrative descriptions (continued)

Example 3

T16 30-March-2005
School Shenzhen Luoling Foreign Language Experimental Primary School
Level of students Grade 4 (age 9-10), 4th year of English
Textbook: New Parade (People's Education Press)
Lesson Duration: 40 minutes
Student number: 53

0.00 53 children sit in 8 groups with 6-7 children in each group in a bigger than usual classroom. They all face the bb when doing whole class work but turn to groups when doing group work. They sing three lovely English songs before the lesson begins.

0.04 T greets the class. Children stand up to greet the T

0.14 T invites children to say something about 'yesterday'. She has written some verbs on the bb to assist children. Six children volunteer to say something about their yesterday's activities. When children have difficulty expressing themselves, T provides timely help. For each child who volunteers to say something, the whole class is invited to clap hands for him/her as encouragement or praise.

3.25 T announces that it is question time and she asks if children have any good questions to ask today. Children start to ask questions and who asks the question will nominate another student to answer it. The whole class claps hands for almost each pair who ask and answer the questions. The questions they ask vary such as, 'Which animal do you like best and why?' 'Which ice-cream do you like best and why?' 'Which is the longest river in China?' etc.

6.00 T introduces the lesson topic and shows an old castle picture on the screen. T writes on the bb the topic: Life in a castle in AD1200. T asks children how many years ago that was. One child says it was 3 years ago. Some children laughed. Another child says it was 805 years ago. The whole class clap hands for S20.

8.09 T clarifies that they are going to talk about life in the past. She asks children to look at the picture and see if they have any questions about the life then. Some children raise their hands to ask questions. E.g. How did people cook? How did they take a bath? How did they eat? Why did they use candles, etc. While children ask and answer questions, T introduces some new words wherever appropriate, such as 'open fire', 'wooden bath tub', etc.

11.48 T asks some of her questions. E.g. Did people have refrigerators then? They didn't have .... How did they keep their food fresh and cold? T also introduces some new words; e.g. electric stove. T writes the main structure on the bb. Children answer T's questions and volunteer different solutions.

Then, children repeat after the T the new words: electric stove, refrigerator, etc. a few times.

14.48 T encourages children to ask more questions using the new structure: 'Did they...; they didn't...' Children volunteer many more questions related to the life in the castle 805 years ago.

15.38 T asks children to repeat the structures on the bb after her a few times and continues to invite children to ask more questions.

17.05 T asks children to work in pairs and ask each other questions about the life in the castle using the structures just learned. Children work in pairs.

17.35 T nominates some volunteer pairs to present their dialogue in front of the whole class. T corrects errors with S50 and S58.

19.28 T asks children to work in groups and act out life in the castle 800 years ago. Children prepare to act out the life in the castle. Children were excited to work together to plan for their role plays.

21.00 T nominates two groups to give their performances. Two groups of 8 children act out their role play. Children's presentations are also very creative using the language they learned before and also very vivid in language

23.25 After stating again how hard life 800 years ago, T asks children to imagine themselves to be scientists and work in groups to introduce their inventions to the class. Children work in groups for the activity again. (It is a topic they have learned previously from their textbook.)

25.35 Three groups of 12 children perform as different inventors and give a short speech about what they invented. Children look very confident in themselves when speaking.

29.00 T asks children to look at the castle again and say what they didn't have.18 children volunteer to say what people didn't have at that time.

34.15 T asks children to talk about life today: how they go to school and what they do after class, etc. Six children tell the class how they go to school today and what they do after school and where they take a bath, etc. Children use the words they learned in class to describe their life today, such as bath-tub, electric stove and telephone, etc.

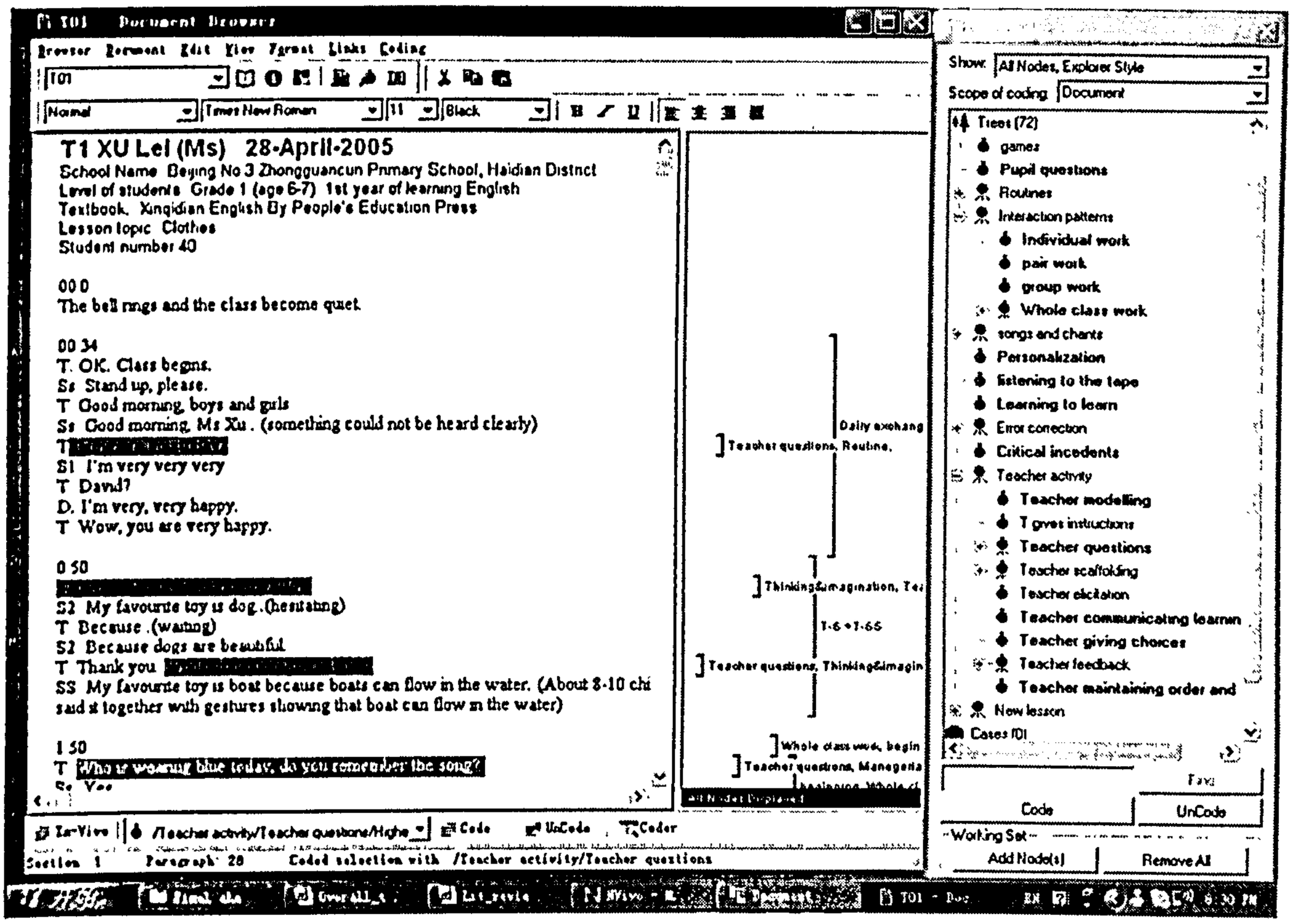
36.00 T shows a robot invented in Japan and told children that it has changed the world. If they are to invent anything to change the world, what would they want to invent. Five children volunteer to express themselves. One of them says he wants to invent a teacher machine because he thinks that teachers are very tired so it can help teacher teach. Another child says he wants to invent some good friends for himself. Children are being very creative.

39.50 T and children sing a song together.

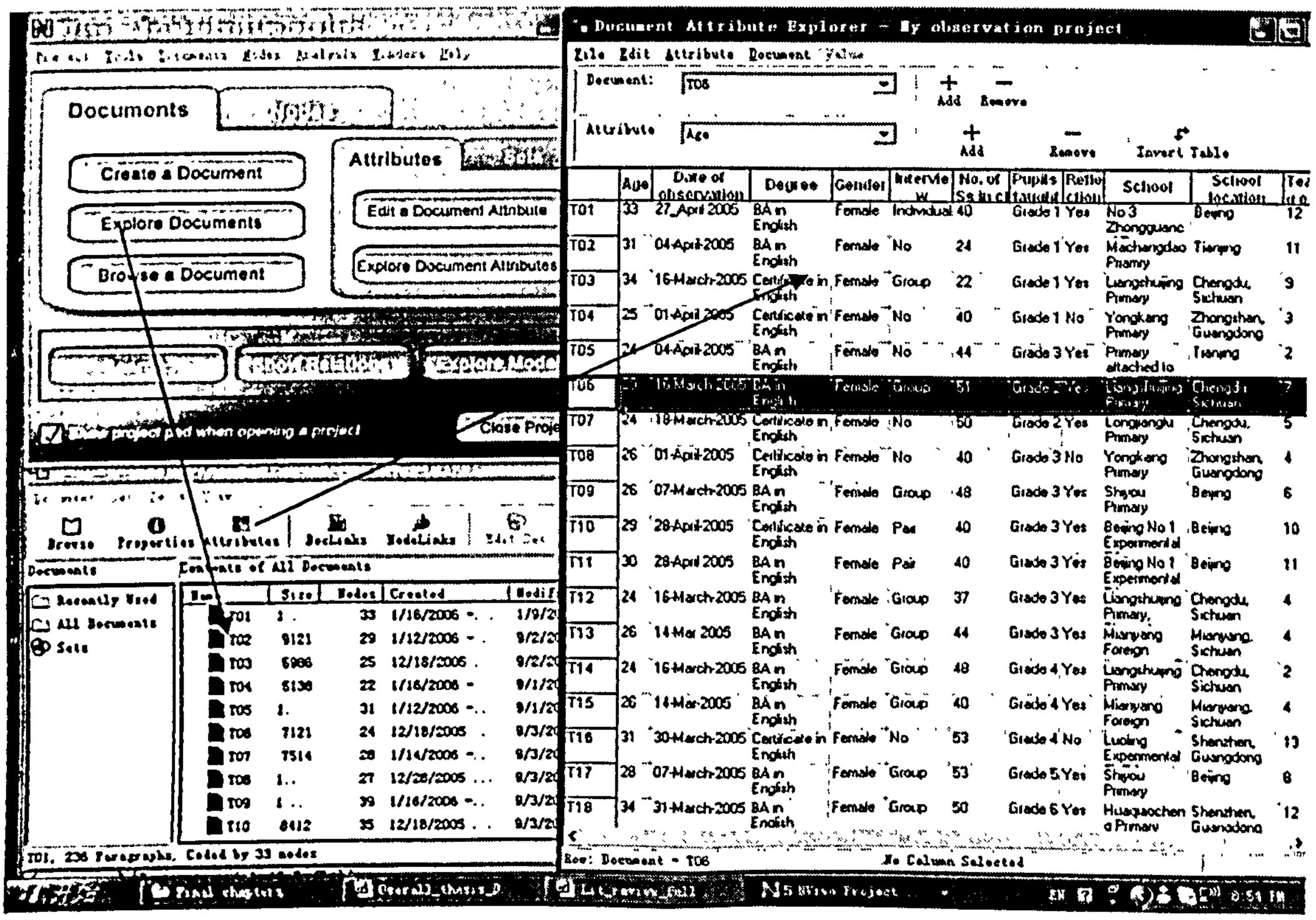
41.00 Homework

Appendix 19 Coding observation data using Nvivo (some examples)

Example 1: Documents are imported and then coded with coder pane on the right.

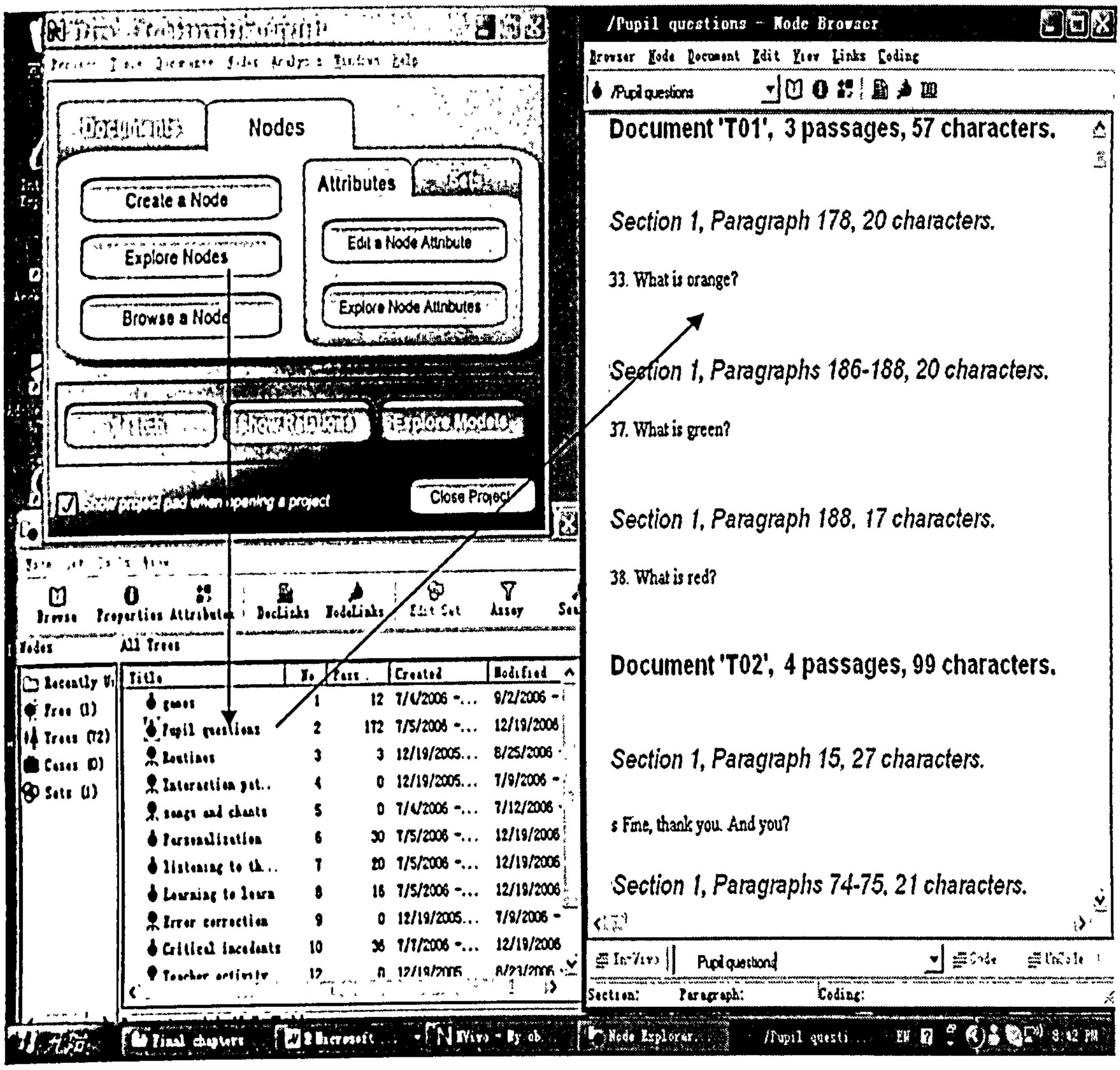


Example 2 Documents are ready to be explored with attributs shown on the screen



	Age	Date of observation	Degree	Gender	Interview	No. of Ss in cl	Pupils taught	Reflection	School	School location	Te
T01	33	27_April 2005	BA in English	Female	Individual	40	Grade 1	Yes	No 3 Zhongguanc	Beijing	12
T02	31	04-April-2005	BA in English	Female	No	24	Grade 1	Yes	Machangdao Primry	Tianjing	11
T03	34	16-March-2005	Certificate in English	Female	Group	22	Grade 1	Yes	Liangshuijing Primary	Chengdu, Sichuan	9
T04	25	01-April-2005	Certificate in English	Female	No	40	Grade 1	No	Yongkang Primary	Zhongshan, Guangdong	3
T05	24	04-April-2005	BA in English	Female	No	44	Grade 3	Yes	Primary attached to	Tianjing	2
T06	23	16 March 2005	BA in English	Female	Group	51	Grade 2	Yes	Liangshuijing Primary	Chengdu, Sichuan	7
T07	24	18-March-2005	Certificate in English	Female	No	50	Grade 2	Yes	Longgangku Primary	Chengdu, Sichuan	5
T08	26	01-April-2005	Certificate in English	Female	No	40	Grade 3	No	Yongkang Primary	Zhongshan, Guangdong	4
T09	26	07-March-2005	BA in English	Female	Group	48	Grade 3	Yes	Shiyou Primary	Beijing	6
T10	29	28-April-2005	Certificate in English	Female	Pair	40	Grade 3	Yes	Beijing No 1 Experimental	Beijing	10
T11	30	28-April 2005	BA in English	Female	Pair	40	Grade 3	Yes	Beijing No 1 Experimental	Beijing	11
T12	24	16-March-2005	BA in English	Female	Group	37	Grade 3	Yes	Liangshuijing Primary,	Chengdu, Sichuan	4
T13	26	14-Mar 2005	BA in English	Female	Group	44	Grade 3	Yes	Mianyang Foreign	Mianyang, Sichuan	4
T14	24	16-March-2005	BA in English	Female	Group	48	Grade 4	Yes	Liangshuijing Primary	Chengdu, Sichuan	2
T15	26	14-Mar-2005	BA in English	Female	Group	40	Grade 4	Yes	Mianyang Foreign	Mianyang, Sichuan	4
T16	31	30-March-2005	Certificate in English	Female	No	53	Grade 4	No	Luoling Experimental	Shenzhen, Guangdong	13
T17	28	07-March-2005	BA in English	Female	Group	53	Grade 5	Yes	Shiyou Primary	Beijing	8
T18	34	31-March-2005	BA in English	Female	Group	50	Grade 6	Yes	Huaqiaochen g Primary	Shenzhen, Guangdong	12

Example 3: The following shows how the node of 'pupil questions' is explored and listed on the screen



Appendix 20 More examples of different greetings at the beginning of a lesson

T1 (Grade 1)

T. OK. Class begins.
Ss. Stand up, please.
T. Good morning, boys and girls.
Ss. Good morning, Ms Xu (xxx)
T. How are you today?
S1. I'm very very very (.)
T. David?
D. I'm very, very happy.
T. Wow, you are very happy.

T13 Grade 3
T. Good morning, boys and girls.
Ss. Good morning, Ms Qin
T. Do you remember the song: one, two, three, four, five, six?
Ss. Yes.
T. OK, Let's sing the song. (Ss. sing the song together)
T. Let's sing 'one little, two little..' together, OK?
Ss. OK! (Another song related with numbers)
T. Are you ready?
Ss. Yes!

T17 (Grade 5)
T. Pay attention. Eyes on
Ss. books.
T. Mouths
Ss. Closed and quiet.
T. Body
Ss Still.
T. Hands?
Ss. empty and folded.
T. The last one, number five, ears are
Ss. open
T. Are you ready for class?
Ss. Yes!
T. Good morning, everyone!
Ss. Good morning, Sandy!
T. I can't hear you.
T. Good morning, everyone!
Ss. Good morning, Sandy!
T. Good morning.

Appendix 21 More examples of warm-up activities

T11 (Grade 3)

T. Very good. First, we have some [incomplete] words on the blackboard, I will describe and you listen and guess. First one. It is a small bag and I put money in it. What is it?

S4. It's purse.

T. Very good. It's a purse. Come and write the complete word on the blackboard.

S4. Ok.

T. No. 2. It is raining now. You can use it. What is it? You, please.

S5. Umbrella. It's umbrella.

T. Very good. Thank you Bob. Write the word, please. Next one. I want to know what time is it. You can tell time with it.

S6. Watch.

T. Yes. You are right. Ok. Next. After dinner, you mother and your father read it. What is it?

S7. It's a newspaper.

T. Thank you. Next one. It has many pictures in it. It's a small book for children. What is it?

S8. It's a magazine.

T. Is it a magazine? Maybe.

S9. It's comic.

T. You are right. OK, come and write out the word. Oh, your handwriting is good. Next one. If I can change the first letter it becomes an animal.

S10. It's a cat.

(The activity continues with more words)

T12 (Grade 3)

T. Let's look. Hello! (T takes out a caterpillar from behind the desk. Children are laughing and excited). I like you!

SS. I like you, too.

T. (Caterpillar) I want to make friends with you. Do you have questions?

S2. What's your name?

T. Oh, what's my name? I don't have an English name. Can you give me a name? An English name.

S2. Peter!

T. Peter? But I am a girl.

S3. Lulu.

T. Wah, Lulu. Thank you. Lulu is a nice name. OK. My name is Lulu. My name is Lulu.

S4. Good morning, Lulu.

T. (Caterpillar) Ok, now, Let's shake hands.(Children were laughing)

S5. What colour do you like?

T. (Caterpillar)Blue, yellow, green.

S6. How old are you?
T(Caterpillar): I'm 2 years old.
T. (Caterpillar) This is a nice classroom. It is a big classroom. What's this in English?
SS. Teacher's desk.
T. (Caterpillar) What's this in English (pointing at the blackboard)?
SS. Blackboard!
T. Blackboard. Thank you. What are these?
SS Windows.
T. (Caterpillar). OK. Windows. They are windows (pointing at the curtain).
SS. No! They are curtains.
T: (Caterpillar). Oh, curtains, curtains, curtains. CURTAINS! (Pointing at a chair)
SS. No! Chair.
T. (Caterpillar). CURTAINS!(pointing at the flag.)
SS. No! Flag.
T. (Caterpillar). It's CURTAINS! (pointing at a pencil case)
SS. No! It's a pencil case.
T. (Caterpillar). It's CURTAINS! (Pointing at the door)
SS. No! It's a door!
T. (Caterpillar). Who can help me? Who can help me? (A child comes up to point at the curtains)
T. (Caterpillar).

T16, Grade 4

T. Can you say something about yesterday? You may use the verbs on the blackboard here. (There are some verbs written on the bb before the lesson)
S1. Yesterday (xxx). (Other students all clapped their hands for him)
S2. Last night, I sent a (xxx) to my mother. My mother said, Good girl
S3. Yesterday I saw a movie.
T. Yes. Ok. Now clap hands again. Anymore?
S4. Yesterday I drank a lot of water, because I am (.)I was very thirsty.
T. OK. Let's clap hands for her. Anymore?
S5. Yesterday, I learned how to rode a bike but I didn't success.
T. I learned how to ride a bike. Can you give another sentence? Now stand up.
S5. Yesterday I rode my bike but I fill (.)
T. I fell down.
S5. But I fell down.
T. I am sorry to hear that. Clap our hands for her. Anymore? Jenny.
S6. Yesterday was my father's birthday. I gave a (.) to a birthday (.) birthday gift.
T. Very good.

Appendix 22 Summary of teachers' questions

Teachers	Total Qs	Routine	Managerial	Checking/ Assessing	Recall/ memory	Situated	Higher order	Unclassified
T1	29	1	14 (39%)	X	3	4 (14%)	7 (24%)	0
T2	61	1	7 (12%)	8	2	35 (57%)	10 (16%)	0
T3	31	2	4 (13%)	1	X	8 (26%)	12 (39%)	4
T4	20	X	6 (30%)	5	X	9 (45%)	X	0
T5	64	X	23 (36%)	8	X	17 (27%)	6 (9%)	0
T6	33	X	7 (21%)	10	X	3 (9%)	13 (39%)	0
T7	37	1	7 (20%)	7	7	5 (14%)	10 (27%)	0
T8	58	X	27 (47%)	13	X	15 (26)	3 (5%)	0
T9	71	4	10 (14%)	8	16	21 (30%)	11 (16%)	3
T10	48	6	6 (13%)	3	10	21 (44%)	1 (2%)	1
T11	28	3	4 (14%)	1	X	15 ((54%)	4 (14%)	1
T12	45	X	2 (4%)	2	X	37 (82%)	3 (7%)	1
T13	64	2	15 (23%)	15	2	27 (42%)	3 (5%)	0
T14	58	X	4 (7%)	12	X	22 (38%)	20 (35%)	0
T15	9	2	2 (22%)	1	X	1 (11%)	3 (33%)	0
T16	29	X	13 (45%)	1	X	3 (10%)	12 (41%)	0
T17	48	1	10 (21%)	8	8	10 (21%)	10 (21%)	1
T18	14	X	2 (14%)	6	4	X	2 (14%)	0
Total	747	23	163	109	52	253	130	11

Appendix 23 More examples of teachers' error correction behaviours

T5 (Grade 2)

T. Now, touch and guess (a child is blindfolded). What's this? What's this? Is it a carrot?
SS. No.
S35. It's a, it's a eggplant.
T. An eggplant.
S35. An eggplant.
T. An eggplant (to the whole class)..
SS. An eggplant.
T. Is he right?
Ss. Yes! (Children all clapped hands for him)

T8 (Grade 2)

T. How many beans are there? OK. Wu Jianmin.
S29. Three beans.
T. Three beans. There are three beans, yes or no?
SS. Yes.
T. Ok. Very good. Please! Next one? You please.
S30. What's this?
T What's this, yes or no? You, now.
S31. What's this?
SS. No!
T. What's this or what ...
SS What are these?
T. Yes. What are these? OK. What are these? Who can answer? What are these?
S32. They are carrots.
T. Good. They are..
SS Carrots.

T13 (Grade 3)

T. It's half past 8. Good! What's the time? En..Mathew. What's the time?
S27 It's half past 9.
T. It's half past (wait) (SS join in) 9. sit down, please. What's the...time? Jan.
S28 It's ha.. past 4
(The child could not pronounce it well and a few children laughed)
T. half past
Ss. Half past
T. Now again.
S29 It's half past 4 (with interesting pronunciation and some children laughed).
T. Half.
S29. Half.
T. Now, everybody, read after me. Half past
SS. half past
T.Half past 4
SS Half past 4 (repeated again).

Appendix 24 More teachers' views on LAMP/LC from the interviews

I believe we must teach our students natural and meaningful language. They must have the opportunity to use the language to express themselves. They should say their own ideas not false ones. I think this can reflect LAMP/LC. That is, we do not force them to say what we want them to say but encourage them to say what they are able and want to say. (T17, Group interview, 7-March-2005).

Classroom is where children learn, it is not a place for teacher to perform their talents. So all I try to do is to give the classroom back to the children, give them the opportunity to learn, make them active with the guidance of the teacher. As a teacher, I retreat to behind the stage. The classroom is theirs (children's). 'Are you happy?', 'How are you feeling?' I often ask them these questions from the bottom of my heart. It is a habit and a way of doing things. I cannot explain clearly how and why. I care for small details. I care for their good learning habits. I don't want them to do it just for a show but I want them to do everything well. (T3, Group interview, 16-March-2005).

I think good habits, attitudes, and children's affective needs are the most important. Knowledge is second, especially in the primary school. For grade one learners, forming good habits is the most important. Otherwise, whoever comes to take the class will have a headache (T1, Individual interview, 27-April-2005)

To me, for beginning young learners, as far as learning knowledge and forming good habits of learning are concerned I think the latter is more important, for example, whether they have the good habit of paying attention in class, whether they enjoy learning in class. If they are very low and discouraged in class, this is no good for them. ...I observe very closely every child, I need to know their personality and interests. ..So in my teaching, I pay more attention to children's attitudes and skills in learning. Although I am no longer very young, I tried to make children like me. When they like me, they are happy in class. If they feel unhappy in class, they will not learn well. (T1, Individual interview, 27-April-2005)